

3019 – 29 CLARENCE PLACE, Gravesend

Proposed Change of Use from Residential Care Home for the Elderly to Residential Care Home for Young Persons

PLANNING STATEMENT

Including Design, Access + Heritage Assessments

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Introduction

This Statement is in support of current Applications for Planning and Listed Building Consent to change the use of 29 Clarence Place from a Residential Care Home for the Elderly to a Residential Care Home for Young Persons. This Statement will describe the current physical and statutory background to the Applications together with the Planning History of the site. It will then examine the proposals and the justification for them whilst examining the design principles and the subject of access to and within the site. Finally, the Statement will consider the heritage value of the site and the effect on this of the proposals.

Existing Context

The property is a large two-storey building located at the junction of Clarence Place and Parrock Street in Gravesend. The building which is Grade 2 listed was constructed around 1850 and sits prominently in an elevated position above street level. The building is constructed of gault type bricks with red stocks at external corners and around door/ window openings. The roof is covered in machine-made clay plain tiles.

The detailing of the building is a debased Gothic suggested that it is a later date given the Georgian / Regency details of adjoining properties in Clarence Place which appear to have been built in the early Victorian period (1830-40).

There is an ancillary “cottage” building to the north of the main building – this Application only relates to the main building.

Once a substantial single dwelling, the property has been converted to residential institutional use. This is similar to properties further down Clarence Place where the size of the existing buildings seems to warrant institutional use or splitting into multiple occupation.

Planning History

The conversion to Care Home Use appears to have occurred in the late 1960's or early '70's – the first Planning Application registered to the site is 19780794 in 1978 which was granted approval for the construction of an on-site laundry room. During 1988 to '89 Applications were approved for small adaptations and alterations, whilst in 1996 Planning and Listed Building Consent Applications ref 19960646 and 19960647 were approved for various extensions for additional bedrooms and ancillary facilities together with connected demolitions and external works. These Permissions are relevant to the current Applications in that the Consent given limited the use of the premises to care for the elderly only - hence the current Applications related to Change of Use. Subsequent applications relate to the discharge of the Conditions for this Application and for approvals for roofing materials. Finally, Application ref.20240850 for a Lawful Development Certificate was refused as a result of the limitations to use of the residential Care Home which led directly to this Application.

The Proposal

The current Application seeks to retain the use of 29 Clarence Place as a Residential Care Use but now for the use of young people of all genders between the ages of 7 - 25.

Catering for three categories of young people is envisaged:

- Age 8-17 years (may have learning difficulties, Autistic Spectrum Conditions, communication needs and other associated social, emotional or mental health difficulties;
- Age 16-25 years (semi-independent living)
- Age 8-25 years (supported living for severely physically handicapped young people

The Plans "As Proposed demonstrate how the existing building would be organised to support these functions without altering the structural layout of the existing Listed Building. The exact use of the Home would be determined by need arising from the commissioning bodies.

Appendix One (attached) describes the approach of the Care Home management to the residential care they will provide.

Design Assessment

The Use of the Proposed Development

The proposal would seek a change of use within the current classification as a Residential Care Home from caring for the Elderly to caring for Young People. As such it is not strictly a Change of Use as it remains within the same C2 use class; rather it is a change within that use class to a different classification of user.

The Layout of the Proposed Development

The proposed layout does not involve any structural alterations and the change to a different class of user is contained within the existing built envelope without extension.

The Amount of the Proposed Development

The proposed use of the building can be contained with existing built form without significant alteration or addition and is thus considered appropriate.

The Scale of the Proposed Development

The proposed use of the building can be contained with existing built form without significant alteration or addition and is thus considered appropriate.

The Character and Materials of the Proposed Development

The character and materials of the existing building will be unaffected by proposed development.

The Proposed Landscaping

This aspect of the existing context does not apply to this development

Access Assessment

Access

Fully inclusive access has been a basic factor in the design of this scheme, and note has been taken of the need for access for all ie. wheelchair users, the ambulant disabled and the visually and aurally impaired.

In assessing the feasibility of all sites as to their suitability for development the ease of access from and proximity to public transport is a material consideration: Given the nature of the residents' issues, this is more relevant for access to the development by staff and visitors.

The development site is located in a primarily residential area within 10 minutes walk of Gravesend central area which has a full range of retail and commercial facilities. Local services are available within 5 minutes walk on Wrotham Road.

It is 5-10 minutes walk to Gravesend station where trains to central London (Victoria, Charing Cross and St Pancras), to Luton and the Airport via Thameslink and to North Kent locations such as Ramsgate, Faversham and Rainham are available.

Bus services (no482) is available in Parrock Street linking into the town centre via a circular service through Singlewell. The bus service uses the Garrick Street/ Barrack Row bus hub which connects directly to the railway station and to other local bus services serving the Gravesend area. At the bus hub, access to the Kent Thameside Fastrack rapid bus transit system serving the Thames Gateway area (Dartford, Ebbsfleet and Gravesend) IS AVAILABLE.

The development will be adapted where necessary in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations 2013 and will comply with the Disability Discrimination Acts. In approaching the building, all footpath and pedestrian routes are level, without obstacles and for the visually impaired with changes in texture to mark potential hazard.

Access by emergency vehicles is available from Clarence Place, William Street and Parrock Street.

Heritage Assessment

29 Clarence Place is a Listed Building (Grade 2). It was first Listed in 1975 and the Listing reference is 1341494.

Kent County Council on their Historic Environment note the construction period as 1867 to 1899.

The Official List Entry states:

“Later 19th Century. A large detached house of irregular plan. Two storeys yellow brick with red brick dressings. Tiled roof with octagonal belvedere. The left portion has two gables with wooden bargeboards. Tiled roof. Two pointed arch windows with Gothic glazing. The ground floor has two mullioned and transomed casements with stone surrounds and hood mouldings. The centre portion has a pebble-dashed first floor with applied timber framing. Projecting porch of two storeys. The ground floor has a row of trifoliated windows and a pointed arched doorcase. The rightside portion has one large gable and is of two storeys yellow brick”

The key factor in assessing the impact of the proposal on the Listed status of the existing building is whether any of the proposed works affect the fabric or the detail or the overall character of the heritage asset.

In this instance the proposed change of use will not affect the fabric, the detail or the character of the heritage asset, given that there will be no internal or external structural alterations, no change to the windows or other openings and not changes to layout. In fact, the only change will be the operation of one door at ground and first floor which would be held shut during normal operation and held open during the operation of the fire alarm.

Mark Heyes

5373 Design and Planning

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Heritage Statement