

Design and Access Statement

In support of Planning Application at:-

Hevercourt Care Home

Goodwood Crescent

Gravesend

Kent

DA12 5EY



Date:- July 2021

Job no:- 2327

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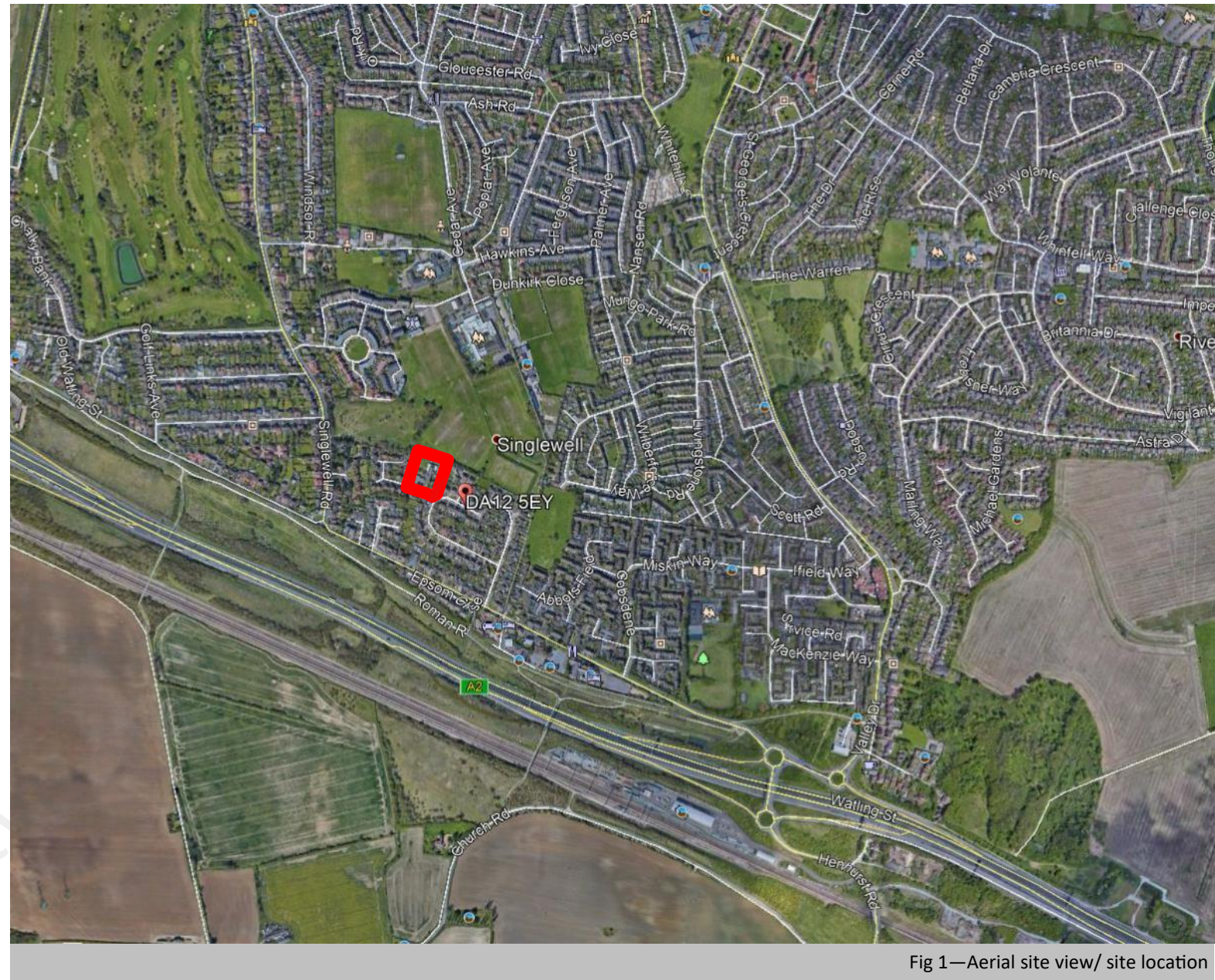


Fig 1—Aerial site view/ site location

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Hevercourt Care Home has been offering services in Gravesend for over 25 years. Currently registered for 46 residents it was purpose built for Kent County Council in the early 1980's and was operated by them until it was sold to Avante care around 15 years ago. Although registered for 46 residents the home currently operates at a capacity of 43 residents as several double rooms are used as single bedrooms and some bedrooms have been converted to lounge spaces.
- 1.2 The proposal is to adapt the existing care homes by constructing ground floor single storey extensions to provide 21 ensuite bed spaces (net increase of 6 new bedspaces), a lounges, 7 new car parking spaces and updated externally landscaped areas all to improve the care environment of the Home and its residents.

2.0 The Applicant

- 2.1 The applicant is Hevercourt Ltd and the two Directors, Julia and Stephen Gilmour are the Registered Providers of the care home. Both have had long international careers in accountancy and management. Mr Gilmour qualified with Price-Waterhouse-Coppers and worked in the USA, Korea and Poland, Mrs Gilmour qualified with Arthur Anderson in New York and works in a variety of international roles including Save The Children.
- 2.2 The Gilmours acquired Hevercourt Care Home from Avante Partnership in January 2016. They have owned and operated care homes since 2003 and currently own and manage other care homes in addition to Hevercourt. They are actively involved in all aspects of their homes and they have set and delivered the highest possible standards of care in compliance with Care Quality Commission (CQC) standards.
- 2.3 The Gilmours are supported by Mrs Diane Smith, the registered Manager at the home who has over 25 years work experience in the industry, including in the management of several care homes. Hevercourt Care Home also employs a Deputy Manager, an Activities Co-ordinator, an Administrator and various team leaders, assistants and housekeeping staff. In all the care home employs 50 members of staff, 35 of whom have duties involving direct care for residents
- 2.4 Hevercourt was inspected by the CQC in Nov 2017 and rated "Good" in all categories. The home has a good reputation among local professional and is well-liked in the local community. Local Authority residents are placed mainly by Kent County Council (KCC).
- 2.5 The Gilmours are fully committed to training and development. More than 70% of care staff have NVQ2 qualifications or higher. When joining the care home, all staff receive training in Safeguarding and Mental Capacity Assessments (MCA). These programmes are an essential element of training and ensure the safety of all residents. New staff complete an induction programme (The Care Certificate) over a two month period and training thereafter is regularly provided to ensure staff are up-to-date with best practice. Staff are also trained in the care home's philosophy and values and receive up to 6 supervisions each year.

2.6 The Owners have shown themselves to be committed to providing high quality living and care spaces for their clients. The below are images from a recent Care Home Extension and refurbishment which has provided upgraded spaces for all residents:-



3.0 The Role of Hevercourt

- 3.1 Hevercourt Care Home benefits from being close to the A2/M2 making it accessible for families who have relatives in the home but may not live in Gravesend.
- 3.2 Hevercourt Care Home has enjoyed good occupancy over past years and its occupancy levels are consistently close to 100%. This has been achieved despite parts of the building being below best standards.
- 3.3 Hevercourt Care Home has an excellent relationship with KCC commissioning teams and works closely with the team to place KCC funded residents as and when required. Approximately 50% of the care home's placements are funded by KCC.
- 3.4 Whilst the general area is relatively well serviced by care homes, there are no brand new purpose-built homes with all ensuite rooms. There is a demand for good quality care in the area. Demand for beds is relatively constant and residents enter the care home as soon as beds become available. The proposal will ensure that all new rooms in Hevercourt Care Home have ensuite facilities to improve the general overall quality of rooms being offered.
- 3.5 Adding new rooms and ensuite facilities will substantially improve the care provision in the home and in the area generally to meet the growing needs of the community for better healthcare facilities in and around Gravesend.

4.0 Site Location

- 4.1 The site is located to southeast of Gravesend, just north of the A2, on the northern edge of Singlewell housing estate, which is characterised by standard brick construction two storey houses under pitched roofs. The site is occupied by a 1960s block, situated in a relatively discreet corner northwest of the junction of Cheltenham Close and Goodwood Crescent. See Fig 1 & 2.

5.0 Context

- 5.1 The site is defined to the south by Cheltenham Close where the rear gardens Nos 3 Cheltenham Close and No 47 Goodwood Crescent lie perpendicular to the public highway and are enclosed by 1.8m high close boarded fencing. A small car park and grass verge, which form part of the application site, provide a buffer between the gardens and the care home.
- 5.2 To the west, the site shares a common boundary with No 2 Cheltenham Close. The houses on Cheltenham Close and to the West of the site have their side/flank elevations facing the site and are at a distance of around 6.5m from the boundary.
- 5.3 To the east, also Cheltenham Close, a second car park and landscaped area separates the care home from housing on Goodwood Crescent. This car park also forms part of the current application. The flank elevations of houses on Goodwood Crescent face the site and are set apart from the care home by a distance of approximately 31m. See Fig 5.
- 5.4 A mature tree belt and open playing fields serving Ifield School, form the northern boundary of the site.



Fig 2—Aerial site view/ site location





Fig 3—Cheltenham Close view looking East



Fig 5—Goodwood Crescent housing to East boundary, looking North



Fig 4—Goodwood Crescent housing looking East



Fig 6—Goodwood Crescent Looking West

Hever Court
Care Home

6.0 Existing Buildings

- 6.1 Hevercourt Care Home is formed of a 3 storey oblong brick block running in a north-south direction through the site with later single storey additions to the southwest and northeast. The principal elevation of the block and main entrance are orientated east away from the public highway. The architectural quality of the building is fairly standard and unremarkable; elevations are generally finished in red-multi facing brick to the ground floor and above ground level, are clad in red clay tile hanging. The pitched roof to the main block is finished in red / brown concrete tiles. See Fig 5 above.



Fig 7—Hever Court Main block South Elevation



Fig 8—Hever Court Main single storey extension

6.2 A flat roofed single storey extension has been added, or may have been original, to the northern part of the building to provide kitchen and other services. A similar, but smaller, single storey extension has been added to the eastern elevation, also for services required to support the Care Home. See Fig 8. To the west the site contains a large garden and a further flat roofed single storey extension that provides various bed spaces, service spaces and management rooms to the Care Home. See Fig 9.

6.3 The care home is set within a spacious plot with a large garden to the north and to the west of the main building which is enclosed by a 1.8m high close board fence. To the east of the main building, the area is more open and provides a well landscaped setting, featuring a mix of hedging, shrubs, grass verges and silver birch trees amongst other native tree species.

6.5 The landscaped areas, gardens and grass verges, provide a generous spatial setting around the building and facilitate integration of the building with the surrounding low density housing. To the south the site is open and spacious with no physical enclosures. Where physical boundaries do exist they generally consist of 1.8m high close boarded fencing except around the car park where the grounds are open and spacious. The houses to the east have their own fenced boundaries for privacy and security. See Fig 5.

6.6 Currently, the care home provides 24 car parking spaces.

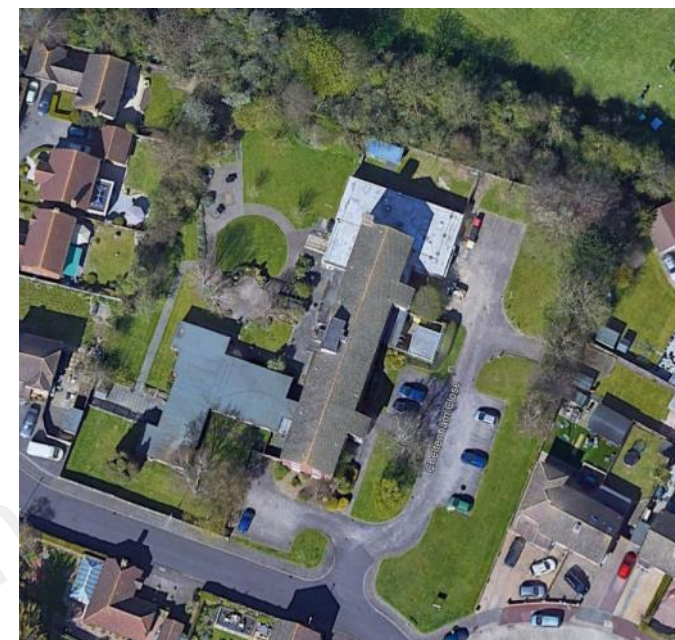


Fig 10—Aerial view of site



Fig 9—View looking SE to large garden and buildings beyond



Fig 11—Additional images of Hever Court

7.0 Previous Consent

7.1 Planning Consent was previously granted under Council Ref: 20/180682 for the demolition of the western single storey extension, together with the construction of new north, south and west single storey wing extensions under pitched roofs to form two new courtyards and 21 new bedrooms. The external finishes proposed a mix of common bond and stack bonded facing bricks to the elevations, large scale glazing to various areas under, rustic brown roof tiles to a general pitch of around 40 degrees. See Fig10. This consent has not been implemented as the Applicant has since considered further improvements to the care home. The scheme also proposed refurbishment of the reception area and modernisation of the circulation space within the care home by creating a longitudinal Internal “street”.



Fig 10—Elevational images from consented scheme

8.0 Proposals

8.1 The current application to extend Hevercourt Care Home amends the previous consent to make some further improvements. The proposed scheme aims to increase the provided bed numbers and to upgrade existing bedrooms with en-suite bathrooms to all new bed spaces. In addition it seeks to improve and provide new communal spaces in the form of lounges and to give better external space which are more easily used by the residents. In addition the proposals aim to improve car parking facilities, the entrance to the care home and internal circulation. This will all be achieved by constructing 3 single storey additions to the care home and by reconfiguring various parts of the existing interior.

8.2 An outline of the proposal is provided below:

- a. New north wing single storey pitched roof extension with canopy to provide a new lounge area for residents. This new wing will link the west wing and main building and will also help form the new main enclosed courtyard area and part of the new figure of 8 circulation route.
- b. New west wing single storey pitched roof extension with canopy to provide 13 bedrooms with ensuite facilities. This new wing will link with the north and south wings and will form the western enclosure of the main courtyard area. This wing also forms part of the new figure of 8 circulation route
- c. New south wing single storey flat roof extension to provide 4 bedrooms with ensuite facilities. This new extension will be linked to the main building by a single storey canopy entrance and, together with the existing single storey buildings on site, will form a second smaller courtyard incorporating the new figure of 8 circulation route.
- d. New east wing including extension to the east elevation to provide 4 ensuite bedrooms. The extension will incorporate and remodel the existing compound, also situated on the east elevation of the building.
- e. Two new external courtyards, including expansion of circulation spaces and new 'figure of 8 route' and 'internal street'.
- f. New single storey canopy entrance to the south elevation and redesign of reception facilities.
- g. Demolition and remodelling of the existing compound area to the east elevation which will upgrade the external appearance of the building and provide a more aesthetically attractive public frontage.
- h. Reconfiguration of car parking areas to provide a total of 31 car parking spaces, including, 2 spaces for disabled persons.
- i. The current proposal is similar to the consented schemes in that it also provides three areas of additional bedspaces in a similar format.

- 8.3 The new scheme proposes to install a canopy over the new entrance to the south elevation where it will have an increased visible presence and to create new reception facilities. Upon entering the building from the south under the canopy, visitors will have clear views of the building layout and along the length of the care home's internal street that will run south-north past the external courtyards in the centre of the building complex. See Fig 13.



Fig 12—Existing entrance

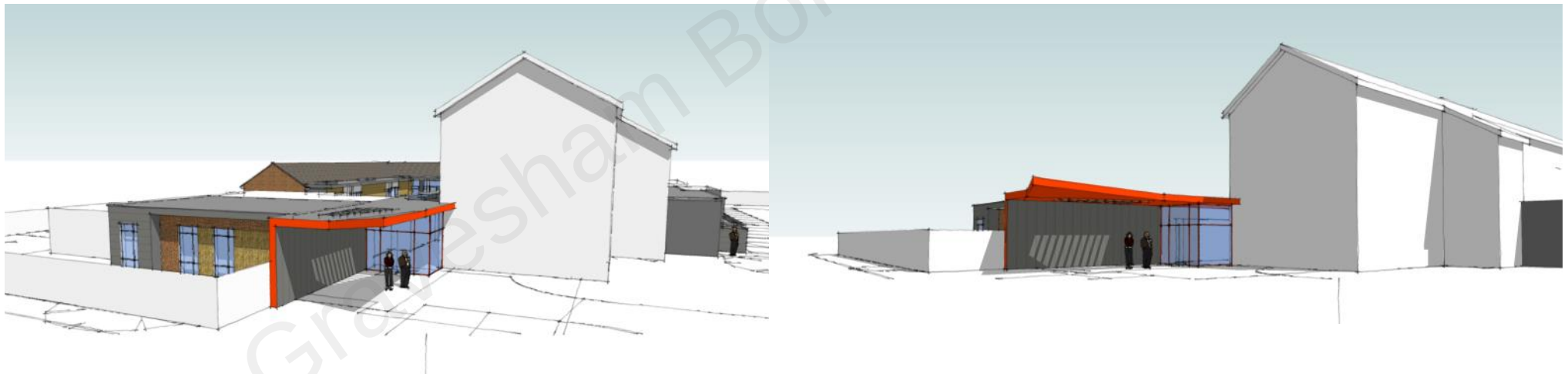


Fig 13—Images of proposed entrance

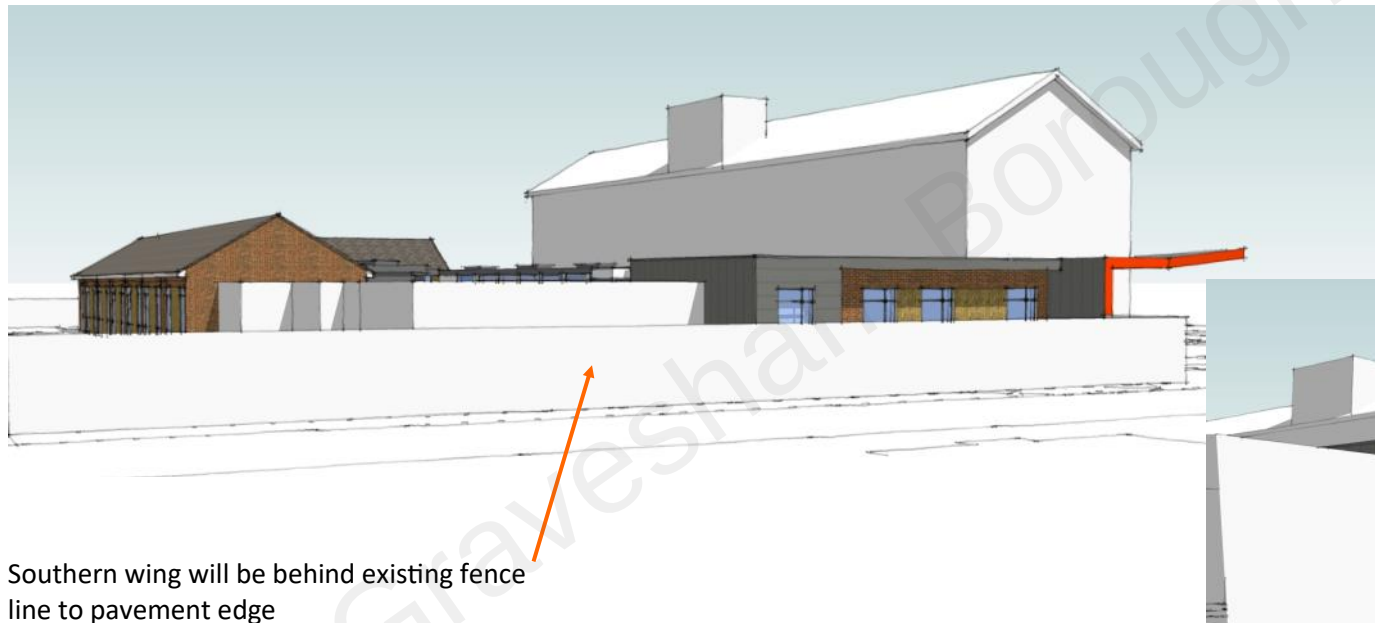
8.4 As in the previous scheme the communal areas at the base of the main block have been enlarged to provide increased communal and circulation space and open up into an enclosed external courtyard to allow residents to safely experience an external garden. See Fig 14.

8.5 The scheme also proposes a new wing to the south, which will connect to the existing single storey building to the south. This extension will form a smaller courtyard close to the main entrance to the building. The size and scale of this wing has been reconsidered since the previous consented scheme and is now presented with a smaller footprint, low-level profile and flat roof to minimise its impact on the street scene.



Fig 14—View into new Northern Courtyard showing ground floor extension to existing block

Ground floor extension to base of main block opening into new courtyard



Southern wing will be behind existing fence line to pavement edge



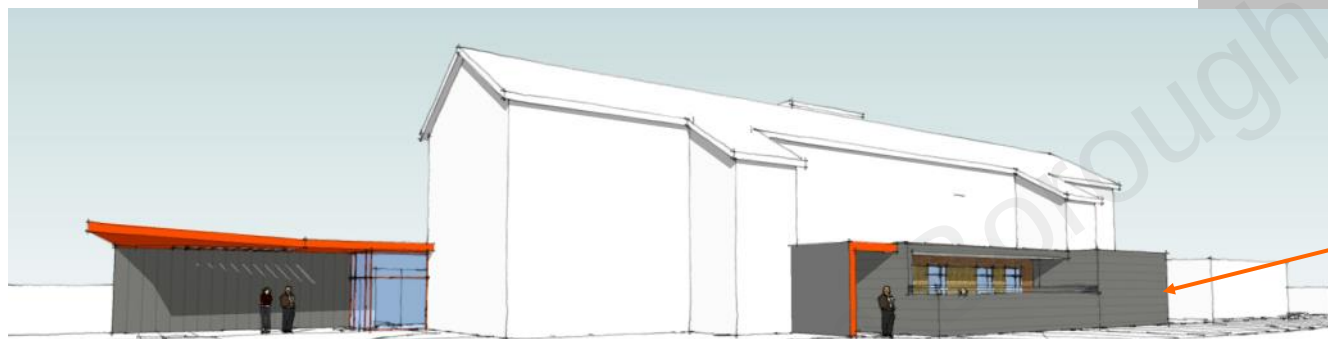
Fig 15—Front views of proposed new South wing

8.6 A modest extension is proposed to the east elevation to provide 4 new ensuite bed rooms. The single storey extension will nestle between two vertical brick projections to the east elevation. The proposed extension will engulf the existing compound with the aim of improve the public façade on the east elevation. See Figs16 & 17.



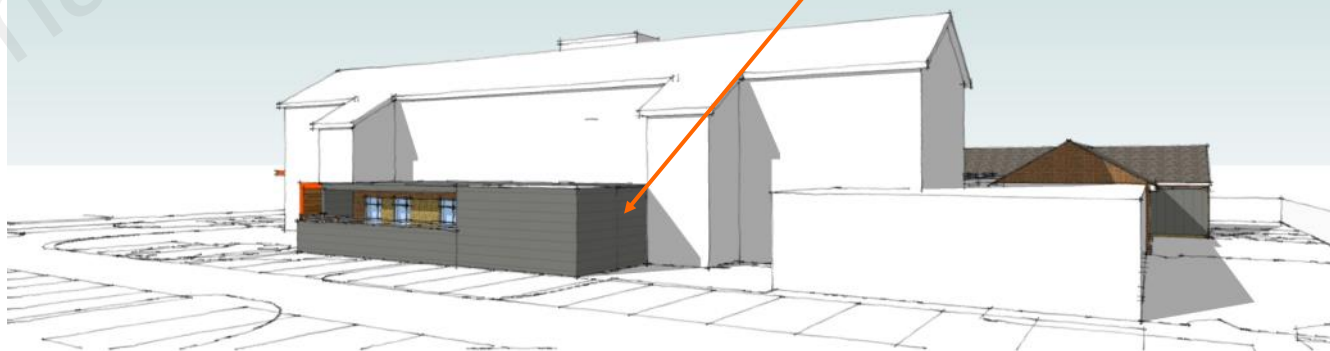
Fig 16—Part Eastern Elevation showing service compound

Existing compound



Compound made part of side extension to "tidy" side elevation

Fig 17—Easterly views of proposed single storey extension



8.11 As in previous consents, the current application proposes a new west wing which will connect to the proposed north wing. The proposed west wing in the current scheme is virtually identical to the consented scheme (Planning Refs: 20180682 and 20170761) except that it has been extended to the north by approximately 1.5m. All other external features remain as consented:- brick elevations under a pitched roof. The wing forms part of the western side of the new figure of 8 circulation route centred around the two new courtyards. See Figs 18 & 19.



Fig 18—West Elevation of Consented Western Wing



Fig 19—View of proposed new West Wing

9.0 Access

- 9.1 Residents and visitors - The home is currently accessed via a relatively small side entrance to the east of the building and small lobby area that leads to the busiest corridor in the building; the corridor itself is very narrow. The scheme proposes to relocate the main entrance to the southern façade of the building where it will have more of a street presence. The new entrance will open up directly into a new figure of eight circulation route that will span all ground floor areas and will incorporate wider communal spaces with widths of between 1.6m and 3m. The figure of 8 route has been designed around the proposed external courtyards to allow natural light into the building and to improve the quality of the environment for residents.
- 9.2 Car Parking and Access – the existing car parking is adequate for access, car parking, service parking, deliveries, turning and manoeuvring. The car park has capacity to accommodate the proposed 7 additional car parking spaces without affecting current access or parking
- 9.3 Access by Disabled Persons – The proposal incorporates improved accessibility for those persons with a disability, including
- a. Level access from the car park to the front door
 - b. Level access in and out of all new doorways
 - c. Accessible WC's near to all communal areas
 - d. New ensuite facilities
 - e. Assisted bathrooms in addition to ensuite facilities for therapeutic assisted bathing
 - f. All doors openings to meet disabled access criteria
 - g. Internal circulation doors will be on hold-open devices to ensure obstacle free circulation
 - h. Access to the hairdressing salon from the main circulation route which is level
 - i. New level courtyards with level access door thresholds and no level changes within these areas
 - J. Landscaping in the courtyards to include waist high planters allowing residents easy access to touch and smell plants as well as allowing small scale gardening for those who enjoy it.

10.0 Employment

10.1 The construction phase will provide employment to local tradespeople. The proposed care home extensions thereafter will help support further jobs within the care home.

11.0 Use

11.1 The use of the building is solely for the purpose of providing residential care to the elderly and to those residents suffering with dementia.

12.0 Amount

12.1 The site area is 0.5 Hectares. The existing care home has a Gross Internal Floor Area (GIFA) of 1460m² across 3 floors. The ground floor has a GIFA of 894m². The proposed extensions will add an additional 672m² to the ground floor to give a total GIFA of 2274m².

13.0 Layout

13.1 The current layout is as follows:-

Ground floor – the building is entered from the East into a central corridor which gives access north-south to vertical circulation (one lift, two staircases). The base of the main building contains lounges, management rooms and service area. The central corridor provides access to the West into the single storey extension where most bed spaces are accessed from a single central corridor. The kitchen and plan areas are at the north end of the main block on the ground floor, the kitchen is accessed both from inside the building and externally, the plant area only from the outside.

First and second floor – vertical circulation provides access to a central corridor on each floor which leads to all rooms and runs longitudinally along the length of the plan

13.2 The proposed layout changes the circulation regime on the ground floor only. Changes to the layout are at ground floor level only where the existing central corridor becomes a secondary circulation space. A new “figure of 8” circulation route will be created across the whole of the floor plate, linking to the two new external courtyards and serving to provide better access to all areas. The new layout will remove dead-end corridors and will provide more passing space for residents and visitors (the existing corridor is 1.6m wide whereas the new public circulation system will be 3m wide) as well as providing a more accessible and legible floor plan. See Figs 20 & 21.

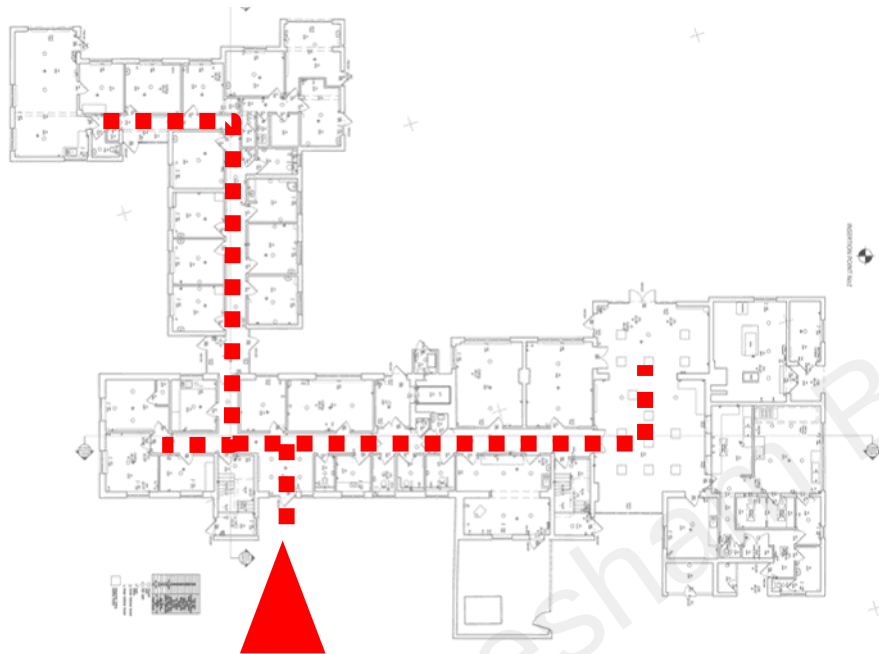


Fig 20—Existing ground floor circulation

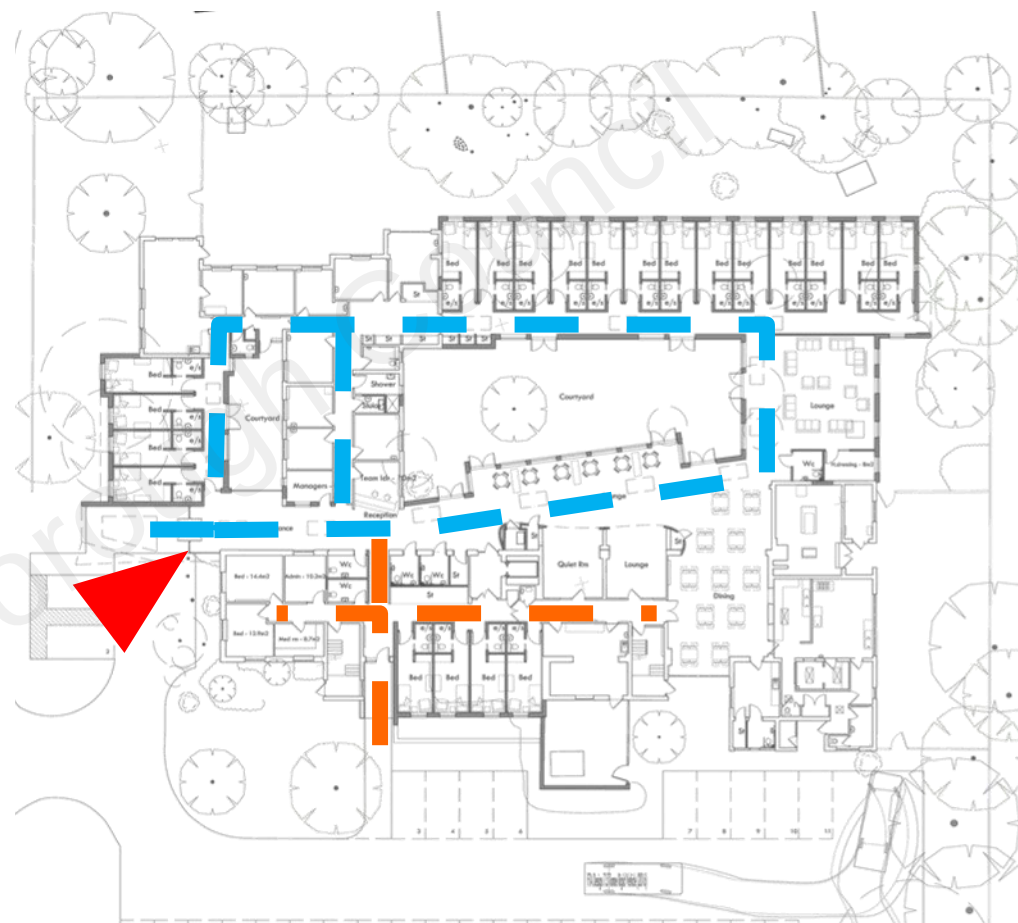


Fig 21—Proposed Figure of Eight circulation

14.0 Scale

14.1 The site is occupied by a three-storey main block and by later single storey additions to the south and a compound area to the north east. When viewed in isolation to the surrounding context it is a prominent building. However, its discreet corner position and landscape setting help minimise its visual impact on the street scene and its spacious plot size make it capable of absorbing additional extensions.

14.2 The proposal seeks to minimise the visual impact of the proposed extensions whilst still providing much needed additional bed space in the following ways:

- A. The new north, west and south wing extensions are discretely located within the confines of the existing garden area.
- B. The north and west wings which have pitched roofs, as previously approved, are set back from the street, receding into the garden area. Where visible from the street from oblique views, the pitched roofs will help integrate the extensions with the adjacent two storey pitched roof houses, thereby retaining harmony with the surrounding built form.
- C. In more exposed areas of the site where the proposed south wing extension will be visible from the street, a single storey extension with flat roof is proposed. This extension will read as subservient in scale to both the existing care home and the neighbouring houses. The flat roof works to create a balance between different



Fig 22—Hevercourt main block in context



Fig 23—Proposed N & E Wings



Fig 24—Existing front view



Fig 25—Proposed front view

structures and building volumes on site. The proposed flat roof single storey elements are approximately 3.65m high (depending on ground level) and are marginally higher than the existing 3.3m high flat roof structures.

- D. The new single storey east wing has been discretely positioned between two existing vertical projections on the east façade of the main building. The extension will absorb the existing compound area and, as well as providing additional ensuite bed spaces, will serve to tidy and update the most public facing façade within the complex.
- E. The complex has been designed around a hierarchy of volumes that will reduce overall bulk and massing to minimise its visual impact in the street scene.

15.0 Landscaping

- 15.1 The site currently features a large garden, which is not often utilised by residents. Many of the care home residents suffer from dementia and cannot explore the gardens unsupervised and do not feel comfortable being in a space that is too open or exposed. See Fig 26.
- 15.2 New landscaping works are therefore planned in the two new private external courtyards. The courtyards will have level access, will be laid out to be easily navigable and will be fully contained on all four sides allowing residents to enjoy the new space in a safe environment without direct supervision. The proposals are laid out to ensure retention of the existing trees and hedging around the complex. See Fig 27.



Fig 26—The Existing Garden

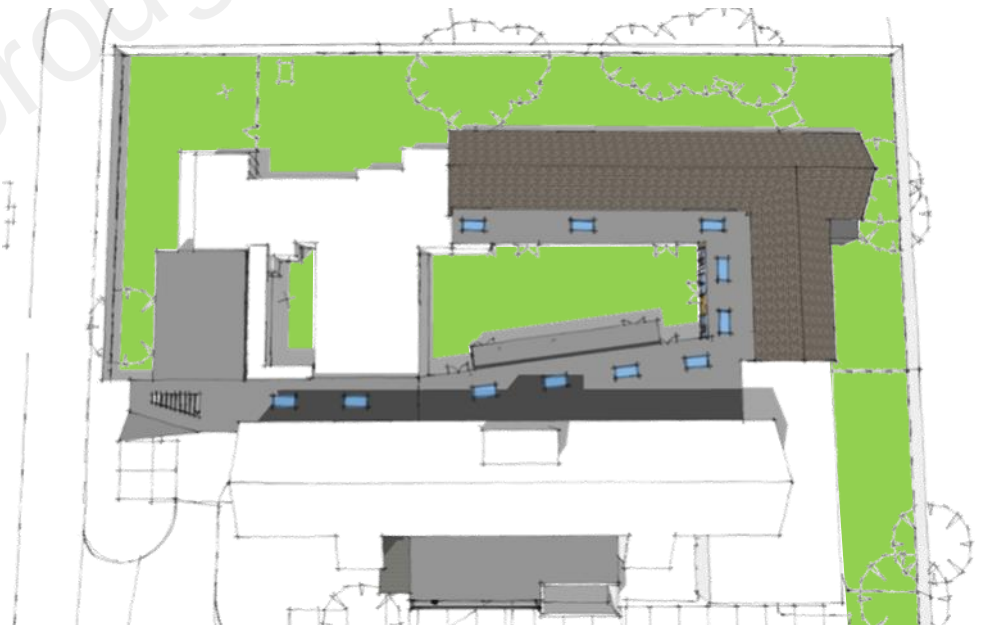


Fig 27—Proposed green areas

16.0 Appearance

16.1 The design and aesthetics of the proposals are a blend traditional and contemporary :-

16.2 Traditional: the north and west wings will be constructed under a pitched roof with a canopy over the courtyard walkways. This design has previously been consented and the proposals in this application are very similar if not the same. External walls will be in facing brick with large scale glazing, stack bonded panels and the pitched roofs will be covered in red/brown tiles

16.3 Contemporary: the south and east wing extension, together with the new compound area will have a more contemporary finish and they will address the public realm. Their scale and height will be lower than the north and west wing extensions and they will incorporate modern materials in a conscious attempt to provide a more inviting and contemporary look on the public facing facades. Care has been taken however, to limit any contemporary interventions so that the predominant character and appearance of the building within its wider setting remains generally traditional in character.

17.0 Car Parking

17.1 The current car parking arrangements at the site are generally informal. There is capacity for 24 parked vehicles to the east of the main block and additional space for service vehicles. Cars can easily enter, turn and leave the site in a forward motion and there is already good access and manoeuvring space for emergency vehicles on the site. The new scheme will accommodate a total of 31 car parking spaces whilst still allowing turning room for larger service vehicle to the north of the parking area.

17.2 The car parking area is not heavily used; visitors stay for short periods (between 5 minutes and an hour and rarely longer). Professionals tend to park for short periods also (approximately 20-30 minutes). The turnover in the car parking area is rapid and there is no spill over onto the street or overcrowding in the car park itself.

17.3 Staff work in shifts and maximum staff numbers at any one time is 18, of which less than half drive. Staff members live locally and more than 50% either car-share, walk or use public transport.

17.4 Staff work in shifts and maximum staff numbers at any one time is 18, of which less than half drive. Staff members live locally and more than 50% either car-share, walk or use public transport.

17.5 None of the care home residents own cars. Traffic is generated by staff, visitors and deliveries only. The increase in the number of bedrooms will not increase the number of delivery/ collection vehicles. Similarly, the increase in number of bedrooms /residents will not necessarily lead to an increase in the number of visits by professional service providers, although their length of stay in the car park may increase whilst they maximize their use of time when conducting visits to more than one resident at any given time.

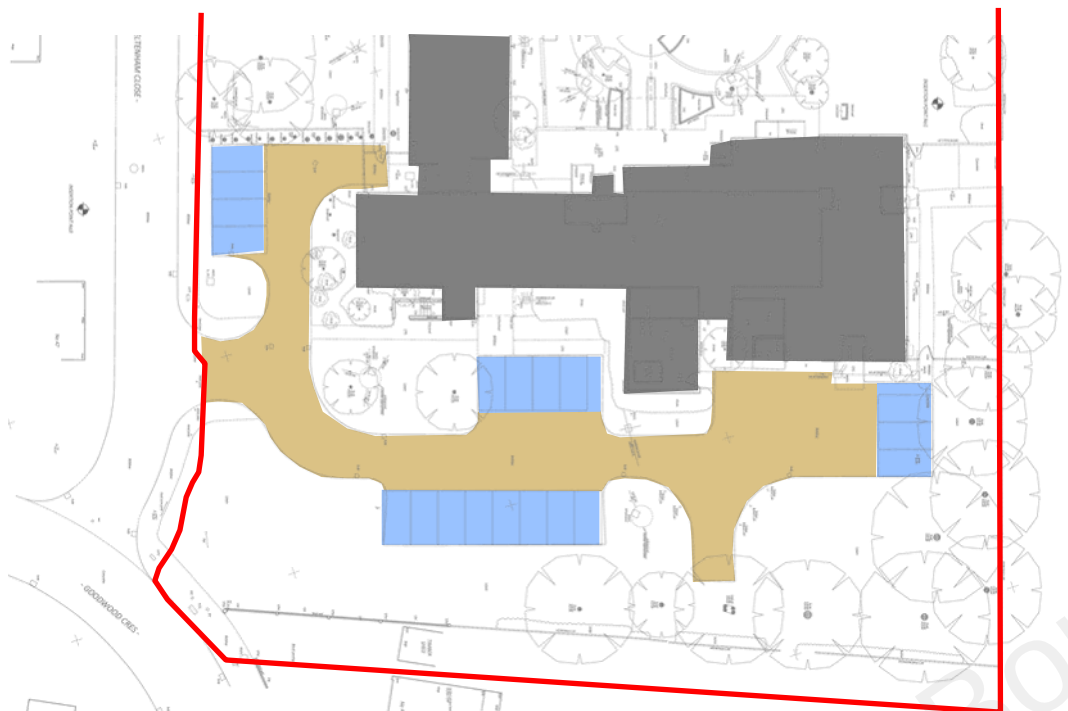


Fig 20—Existing Car parking Arrangements

Turning area for service vehicles



Fig 21—Proposed Car parking Arrangements

18.0 Waste

18.1 Most of the waste produced by the site is domestic in nature. However where necessary some items are disposed of as clinical waste. Facilities for the storage of waste will remain in their current location - in the service compound area on the east elevation of the building. The existing storage area has a surplus capacity and can accommodate a small rise in volume. Waste is collected on a weekly basis by two contractors.

19.0 Conclusion

19.1 The general principle of extensions to the complex has already been established in the previous consent (Planning Ref:-20/180682), including:-

- i. An increase in bedroom spaces was previously supported.
- ii. An increase in parking provision to around 31 spaces was established in the previous consent and access to the site was considered suitable.
- iii. A figure of 8 circulation space set out around two external courtyards formed through the construction of new bedroom wings and lounge area to the north, south and west. These wings are all single storey in height. In the previous consent the south wing, the most prominent in the street, was bulkier than the current proposal. The scale has since been reduced to maintain openness to the south of the site.

19.2 The new application seeks only to amend the existing consent through the following additional alterations including:-

- i. Relocation of the entrance and the inclusion of a single storey entrance canopy. The location of the new entrance will be more practical, providing a more legible entry point for all users which is good practice in any design. The new canopy entrance has been designed carefully to be low in height and sensitive to site context and makes use of modern materials (the use of traditional materials in a flat roof canopy construction would result in a low quality appearance. The proposed materials will provide a higher quality of external appearance and will improve the public realm.
- ii. A single storey extension to the south to provide additional bed spaces (a different version of the south wing was previously consented) and a new compound to the east elevation. The new design incorporates the right balance of modern and traditional materials and will form a low rise structure to preserve openness to the south of the site. The proposed compound will improve the overall aesthetic appearance of the building on this side of the complex. The use of modern materials will ensure that a high quality design is achieved.

Proposed elevations materials.

Dark Grey Standard Seam zinc cladding



Red facing bricks



Cream stack bond brick panels



Fig 22—Proposed palette of materials