

Design and Access Statement
Policy and Design Alignment Summary
Dene Holm Care Home, Dene Holm Road, Northfleet, Gravesham

1. Purpose of this Summary

This summary explains how the Design and Access Statement has been prepared to align with, and respond to, both:

- The **Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)**; and
- The **National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)**,

and how the design principles, layout, scale, appearance, and access arrangements directly reflect the shared objectives of national and local planning policy.

This crossover demonstrates that the proposal is not only acceptable in land-use terms, but that its design quality and accessibility actively deliver policy outcomes.

2. National Planning Policy Framework and Design Response

Specialist and Elderly Accommodation (NPPF Paragraph 71)

Paragraph 71 of the revised NPPF places explicit emphasis on the delivery of mixed-tenure housing, including specialist and older people's accommodation.

Design and Access Response:

- The scheme delivers a purpose-built Class C2 care and rehabilitation facility, replacing a redundant care home with modern, accessible accommodation.
- The internal layout, communal spaces, and landscaped amenity areas are designed specifically to support older residents' wellbeing, mobility, and social interaction.
- The residential scale and non-institutional architectural approach align with the NPPF's emphasis on high-quality living environments for older people.

Sustainable Transport and Access (NPPF Paragraph 110)

Paragraph 110 requires development to prioritise safe, accessible, and sustainable modes of transport.

Design and Access Response:

- The site layout provides safe and legible pedestrian routes, step-free access, and inclusive movement throughout the site.
- Vehicular access, servicing, and emergency access are clearly separated and safely accommodated.
- The location's proximity to bus routes and Gravesend town centre supports sustainable travel choices for staff and visitors.

Efficient Use of Land and Urban Regeneration (NPPF Paragraphs 143 and 155–157)

The revised NPPF promotes a flexible approach to land efficiency and encourages the regeneration of previously developed land within urban areas.

Design and Access Response:

- The proposal redevelops a brownfield site within the urban area of Northfleet.
- Building form and layout make efficient use of the site while respecting surrounding residential scale and amenity.
- Changes in site levels are used positively to reduce perceived massing and visual impact.

3. Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy and Design Response

CS01 – Sustainable Development

Policy Objective: Deliver economic, social, and environmental benefits through sustainable development.

Design and Access Response:

- The redevelopment reuses previously developed land and delivers essential social infrastructure.
- High-quality design, landscaping, and sustainability measures support long-term environmental performance.

CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development

Policy Objective: Focus development within the urban area of Gravesham.

Design and Access Response:

- The site lies wholly within the urban area and has an established care use.
- The scale and layout of the proposed buildings are appropriate to their residential surroundings.

CS10 – Physical and Social Infrastructure

Policy Objective: Protect and enhance community infrastructure.

Design and Access Response:

- The proposal replaces a lost care facility with modern, fit-for-purpose accommodation.
- Communal facilities and landscaped spaces support resident wellbeing and community resilience.

CS11 – Transport

Policy Objective: Promote sustainable transport and safe access.

Design and Access Response:

- Safe vehicular, pedestrian, and cycle access has been embedded into the site layout.
- Parking and servicing are appropriately managed to avoid harm to local highways.

CS14 / CS15 – Housing Type, Size, and Density

Policy Objective: Support specialist accommodation and efficient land use.

Design and Access Response:

- The scheme provides specialist elderly and rehabilitation accommodation at a density appropriate to the site's context.
- The layout balances operational requirements with residential character.

CS18 – Climate Change

Policy Objective: Reduce carbon emissions and improve resilience.

Design and Access Response:

- Fabric-first design, SuDS, and energy-efficient construction are integrated into the scheme.
- Landscaping supports urban cooling and biodiversity.

CS19 – Design Principles

Policy Objective: Achieve high-quality, inclusive, and locally responsive design.

Design and Access Response:

- The architectural approach is contemporary but sympathetic.
- Building massing is broken into wings to reduce bulk.
- Inclusive access and legibility are fundamental to the design.

4. Summary of Policy and Design Integration

The Design and Access Statement demonstrates a clear and consistent crossover between:

- **National planning policy objectives**, particularly in relation to elderly accommodation, sustainable access, and efficient land use; and
- **Local policy requirements**, including sustainable development, social infrastructure provision, high-quality design, and inclusive access.

The design has not been developed in isolation, but as a direct response to policy objectives at both national and local levels. As such, the proposal represents a well-integrated, policy-led scheme that delivers tangible planning, social, and design benefits.