

4. The Proposal

4.10 Landscape character

On the national level, the Site falls within the National Character Area (NCA) 128 South Hampshire Lowlands, which is a low-lying plain between the chalk hills of the Hampshire and South Downs and Southampton Water. The NCA is dominated by the city and port of Southampton and its adjoining towns and suburbs. In the more rural areas, it is a mixture of farmland, particularly pasture, and woodland.

On the county level, as described in the Hampshire County Integrated Character Assessment 2011, the Site falls within the Landscape Character Area (LCA) 2e Forest of Bare West and the Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated Landscape Character Type (LCT).

The LCA 2e encompasses the lowlands of the Hampshire Basin, bounded by higher chalk of the Hampshire Downs to the north and Portsdown Hill and the Coastal Plain in the south west and south east respectively. The Lowland Mosaic Heath Associated LCT covers the western part of the LCA 2e within and around the Site. It is characterised by a varying geology of sands, sandy clays and gravels, occasionally with narrow valleys underlain by the clay and its soils are generally a mixture of acidic sandy and clay. It typically contains grazed pasture small enclosures, in well wooded settings closely linked with adjoining heath and common land. Horse grazing and urban fringe uses are widespread. This LCT has typically small to very small size regular pattern field with very strong association with 19th century origins of enclosure over commons.

Whilst the above landscape characteristics on the county level have some relevance to the Site, local landscape character assessment studies seem more appropriate due to the local, very enclosed Site context and the location of the Site at the edge of an urban area.

In the local context, the Site lies within the LCA 11 M27 Corridor, as described in the Landscape Character Assessment for Eastleigh Borough, 2011. The character area is dominated by the motorway and to the south of Moorgreen it follows the distinctive,

undulating and generally well-wooded landform. Land directly adjacent to much of the motorway consists of heath-associated pasture and woodland. This limits the visual intrusion of the motorway. The woodland is dominated by oak and birch with frequent patches of conifers; rhododendron and laurel often form the understorey. For much of its length the area is hemmed-in by development in West End, Hedge End and substantial belts of recent woodland, often with conifers at their edges.

The key characteristics for this character area are:

- Presence of motorway;
- Proximity of urban edge and large areas of significant woodlands;
- High ground to the west of the motorway, undulating to the north and east;
- Small pasture fields often with unmanaged hedges;
- Pockets of relatively quiet rural areas shielded by woodland and landform.

The Site's character is partially in line with the above descriptions, however, it is also influenced by a suburban area to the west, which reduces its tranquillity in comparison with the more central and rural parts of the LCA 11 M27 Corridor.

The Site is in poor condition and includes large areas of dense, overgrown scrub and brownfield land with remains of demolished buildings in its central part. Broadleaved plantation woodland and mixed, semi natural woodland are present along the Site's northern and southern boundaries. A close-boarded fence marks most of the Site boundary, including its primary frontage along Moorhill Road. A short section of the boundary adjoining woodland areas is marked by a metal railing fence. Several earth/aggregate storage mounds are present in the eastern part of the Site. There are two access gates to the Site along Moorhill Road.



Panoramic View - Application Site

4. The Proposal

4.11 Visibility and Viewpoints

The Site's visual envelope is very limited due to the surrounding vegetation, landform and built environment. To the west, the Site is visible from Moorhill Road and the adjacent suburban, residential edge. There are no views of the Site from any residential areas further to the west. Whilst the western Site boundary is well visible from the adjacent road (see **Viewpoint 1**), its visibility rapidly diminishes further down and up Moorhill Road, (as illustrated by **Viewpoints 2 and 3**), due to the angle of view and intervening vegetation.

The presence of a covered reservoir to the south, vegetation and a small drop in topography results in no visibility from a public footpath running through the woodland area to the south of the Site, as illustrated by **Viewpoint 4**. To the east and south east of the Site, limited views towards the Site's eastern boundary are possible through a dense tree cover with some understorey. Those views are illustrated by **Viewpoints 5 and 6**. Similarly, views from the north east towards the Site and also available from informal public footpaths in close proximity to the Site (as illustrated by **Viewpoint 7**). This view is dominated by woodland with glimpses of the northern reservoir, which due to its elevated location screens all views towards Moorhill Road.

To the north, the Site is screened from footpaths running through Telegraph Woods (see **Viewpoint 8**) and from Telegraph Road (see **Viewpoint 9**).



Location Plan - Viewpoints
Viewpoint panoramics shown in next page

4. The Proposal

4.12 Visibility and Viewpoints



Viewpoint 1 - Moorhill Road, in front of the Site



Viewpoint 2 - Moorhill Road, south of the Site



Viewpoint 3 - Moorhill Road, north-west of the Site



Viewpoint 4 - Telegraph Woods, near the southern reservoir



Viewpoint 5 - Telegraph Woods, south-east of the Site



Viewpoint 6 - Telegraph Woods, near the eastern Site boundary



Viewpoint 7 - Telegraph Woods, north-east of the Site



Viewpoint 8 - Telegraph Woods, north of the Site



Viewpoint 9 - Telegraph Road

4. The Proposal

4.13 Landscape vision

Landscape strategy

The landscape proposals for the proposed Care home development at Moorhill Road, West End seek to create a series of formal and informal outdoor spaces to reflect the future well-being needs of the residents and care staff. These have been carefully formulated in response to the woodland setting, and the associated site constraints and opportunities. These are based on the following:

- To provide a strong sense of place;
- To reinforce the landscape setting by providing a strong palette of native tree planting and complementary boundary vegetation to screen building façade from the road to be in keeping with surrounding landscape character;
- Provide a safe and secure communal garden which will allow residents to participate in informal contemplation and participate in growing plants and informal food production
- Provision for a range of sensory landscapes to stimulate senses, with all year interest avoiding prickly and poisonous plants or fruit, seeds or berries that might be harmful to residents with dementia;
- Provision for woodland trails around the more formal garden elements to allow those with more mobility to enjoy surrounding native tree planting; and
- To provide ecological enhancement through a range of native and non-native planting that offer residents the opportunity to connect with surrounding natural environment.

Landscape Structure

Applying the 'Garden Rooms' approach, the design provides a series of connected communal spaces for social events and gentle exercise through garden paths. Intimate private terraces will allow residents to seek solitude and personalise their own space. Enhancements to the adjacent woodland landscape will offer residents the opportunity to interact with nature. Together this will deliver a variety of sensory experiences and support well-being in a safe, interesting, and friendly environment.



Landscape Plan

4. The Proposal

4.14 Landscape vision

Planting Strategy

Planting species will strike a balance between reinforcing the woodland setting whilst maximising opportunities for sensory and seasonal planting that will provide year-round interest and help with resident's well-being. Together this will provide an abundance of colour and hues set within a woodland backdrop. The presumption will be in favour of native species wrapping around the site, although it is acknowledged that there will be a transition to more formal planting around the care home gardens and communal courtyards.

Tree planting across the site will adhere to EBC's Tree SPD to ensure a nett gain in species across the development. These will mainly comprise native and ornamental species that will offer diversity to the scheme and accentuate certain areas, providing further visual interest.

Materials Palette and Boundary Treatment

Sensitive surface materials will help to provide a robust and simple palette that reinforces the architectural design and relationship with the adjacent woodland.

Hard Landscape

Hard Landscape will be used in various areas within the development to provide legibility and clearly marked routes and help to define connected garden paths, private patios, and communal terraces. The layout is designed to create a sense of security especially for dementia residents who are more at risk of becoming disorientated. To alleviate this, all pathways have focal street furniture at the end to ensure that there are no dead ends, reducing the risk of dementia residents from becoming lost within the gardens.

These areas of hard landscape will reinforce identity and create a strong 'sense of place' whilst being sympathetic to the surrounding natural environment through the incorporation of more natural colours, finishes and materials. Whilst the design seeks to avoid conflict with existing tree roots, where unavoidable no dig construction techniques will be applied. High quality paving is proposed with the use of softly contrasting colours and unit sizes, which will be used to add interest within large areas of surfacing. Changes in colour and texture will also be used to provide direction and define public and private edges.



Courtyard Garden



Enhanced frontage



Northern boundary enhancement

Woodland walk, woodland edge enhancements

4. The Proposal

4.14 Landscape vision

Boundaries

The western boundary is defined by the proposed 1.2m high metal estate railing along the retained and proposed hedgerow. The proposed hedgerow will be maintained to the appropriate height (approx. 1.2m) to provide a formal appearance whilst enabling views out and towards the care home.

The northern, southern, and eastern boundary from the western building edge onwards will be enclosed in a higher 1.8m metal palisade fence that will ensure that residents feel safe and secure within the care home garden but allow the landscape to flow seamlessly into the woodland habitats and allow associated wildlife to move freely.

In summary, the landscape principles set out above will deliver a safe and healthy environment for residents applying the cohesive, sustainable, ecologically rich environment respectful of the existing landscape character and setting.



Car park Greening



Garden walks and pathways



Sensory planting

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4.15 Proposed Movement & Access

Proposed Pedestrian Access

Pedestrian access to the site is provided via the main site entrance to the main home entrance. Within the site all access doors to both the care home and care apartments will be provided with level access.

The care home will provide residents with access to safe and secure external space on each level either to the landscaped gardens on the ground floor or to terraces on the first floor and second floors.

Proposed Vehicle Access

A total of 23 parking spaces have been proposed for the care home of which 2 are accessible and 3 will have EV charging points.

The parking and access has been designed so all vehicles can arrive and exit in a forward gear. It should also be noted that the access road have been tracked to show compliance with approved document B for the use of a fire tender. Access is proposed through the site with vehicles arriving and exiting from the northern most existing entrance.

Servicing and Refuse

A service bay has been provided adjacent to the care home service entrance. Refuse is to be stored within a designated stores next to the building and is located to ensure a sensible proximity to the service entrance. Vehicle tracking has been carried out to ensure a suitably sized refuse vehicle to be manoeuvred into the site.

Full tracking of both a service vehicles and refuse lorry has been provided within the transport statement which demonstrates compliance and how each vehicle can enter and leave the site in a forward gear, improving the current arrangement.

Proposed Cycle Access

A separate covered cycle shelter is proposed, providing space for 12 cycles with staff changing facilities within the home comprising both showers and lockers located on the ground floor.



Proposed Vehicular Access



Proposed Pedestrian Access



Proposed Service Access



Proposed Cycle Access



Conclusion

5. Conclusion

This scheme has evolved over many months as part of a wider team collaboration taking into consideration local designation, character, ecological and landscape importance as well as the numerous site constraints.

Layouts have been refined over this time to ensure a both a well designed proposal is put forward in this application, whilst also ensuring a high quality design and layout is provided for the residents and staff that will spend many hours within. Due to the nature of the site the layout has been considered both in terms of inside the building and more importantly how this relates to the wooded context.

Elevation treatment has been carefully considered to respond to the comments received from both the Local Planning Authority, Design Review Panel as well as the local residents. Whilst it has not been possible to incorporate all of the suggestions we have consciously reviewed each comment to ensure the overall design solution is not compromised and a harmonious proposal is presented within this document. Materials have been chosen to provide a warm and natural texture to the building, thus allowing it to sit comfortably into its surrounding wooded context.

A positive pre-application engagement has been held with the Local Planning Authority over the duration of the project with positive and welcomed comments returned from officers. In addition to the pre-application, a separate Design Review Panel presentation was made and received positive and constructive feedback which has allowed the scheme to move forwards with positivity and confidence to the point of application.

There is a national shortage of care facilities which is only expected to worsen over the next 15 years, this proposal provides an excellent location for a modern, high-quality care home that helps in reducing this shortfall. It will also utilise a 'brownfield' site that would otherwise only provide a 5 bedroom house within. This is highlighted within the local plan as a key issue where the need of specialist care facilities for our ageing population, including those with dementia and that these may be difficult to provide within the urban edge. I.e. may be needed in 'Countryside'.

Emerging Policy DM25 should be given significant weight in this case. DM25 states that new development should seek to respond to the requirements of an ageing population by increasing the supply of specialist housing and accessible housing.

Policy DM25 states that the Council will support the provision of accommodation suitable for the needs of older people and that proposals should be:

- Located in sustainable locations with good access to the local transport network;
- Close to local facilities that residents can ideally use; and
- Well integrated into the local community.

The proposed care home at Moorhill meets the DM25 criteria.

At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. These are social, economic and environmental objectives.

The proposals will result in social benefits through:

- Provision of much needed care and retirement facilities, where there is a clear significant demand in both the locality and the borough as a whole; and
- Provision of accommodation that can be counted towards meeting the authority's emerging housing requirement in accordance with the national practice guidance and which will free-up other housing within the wider housing market.

The proposals will bring about economic benefits through:

- A new, modern care home that will provide new jobs to benefit the local economy.
- The scheme will generate employment related to the construction of the proposed development; and
- Future residents and visitors are likely to contribute to the local economy.

The proposals will create environmental benefits (as set out later in this document) through:

- Provision of a high-quality, landscaped development that makes efficient use of previously developed land; and
- Ecological protection and enhancement measures.

The proposed development will evidently bring about multiple benefits, in particular a high quality development with attractive features for the locality and much needed care facilities. It makes efficient use of previously developed land and will provide jobs in a sustainable location. These should be afforded significant weight as considerations in the planning balance.

The scheme provides a high quality, sustainable design solution, responding in a positive manner to the key objections of the National Planning Policy framework. It is therefore respectfully requested that this application is approved without delay.



HIGHWOOD

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