

## Urban Design Comments

### F/24/97312 – Land Adjoining 4 Brookfield, Providence Hill

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**From:** Urban & Landscape Design Team to Development Management

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**Planning Officer:** Rebecca Altman

**Date:** 22 October 2024

**Proposal:** Construction of Residential Care Community, comprising a 69-bed care home (Use Class C2) and 5 x 2-bedroom close care cottages (Use Class C3 age restricted), with associated access, internal access road, parking, landscaping and infrastructure (amended description) (updated plans and further information received October 2024).

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#### Summary:

- The layout was slightly reduced and now the southern projected wing is set back from existing neighbours minimising impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties.
  - A sunlight study was submitted to ensure that natural light penetrates all habitable rooms.
  - A visualisation was requested from the site's entrance to clarify previous concerns about the roof form and its impact on the surrounding area as the roof will be highly visible from the street.
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These comments are made in relation to the plans and supporting information dated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2024 and should be read in conjunction with comments from the Heritage, Landscape, Tree and Ecology Officers.

## 1. Site Context

### Landscape

The northern boundary is well treed and covered by a blanket Tree Preservation Order that forms an important backdrop to the site and which is prominent in the important view from Providence Hill. To the northeast of the site is a SINC. The southern boundary abuts Providence Hill and is marked by well established tree and shrub planting that provide good screening to the site.

In addition, Providence Hill is a bus route and there are bus stops within easy walking distance of the site.

### Built Heritage

The site lies outside, but on the southern boundary of, the Bursledon Windmill Conservation Area (CA). [Bursledon Windmill](#) itself is Listed Grade II\* and the adjacent [Granary](#) is Listed Grade II. An important view of the Windmill exists from Providence Hill adjacent to 4 Brookfield, as shown in the *Bursledon Windmill Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals SPD* (BWCAAMP). This view needs to be preserved and enhanced.

#### Planning Policy

The Site is covered by Policy BU1 in the emerging Local Plan. This Policy states that the site is allocated for “... *approximately 19 dwellings...*” provided that, amongst other things, “*the development provides a high-quality landscaped setting which preserves or enhances the special interest, character and appearance of the adjoining Bursledon Windmill Conservation Area and safeguards the setting of the listed windmill.*”

#### Existing Built Form

Directly to the north of the site is a recent residential development at Goslings Turning that has significantly affected the setting of the Conservation Area and Listed Buildings. This development has however had regard to the important view identified in the BWCAAMP and a well overlooked area of Public Open Space has been created to accommodate this.

To the southeast are detached dwellings forming ribbon development along Providence Hill, and beyond these another contemporary residential development called Oakeley Vale.

On the southern side of Providence Hill is the well-established built up area of Lowford, which has now merged with Bursledon following the significant expansion of the village over the past 50+ years. Development is generally of modest two-storey domestic scale.

## 2. General comments to the updated plans

The proposal has evolved positively, and further information has been provided to clarify the size, mass and visual appearance. The amended scheme is also an improvement in terms of design and external materials when compared with previous iterations and it blends much better with the surrounding context.

The design approach has sought to create a variety of built forms to mimic the residential scale in order to break up the visual bulk and mass of the building whilst hiding the majority of the built form within the topography of the site. This is a reasonable approach to accommodate the type and scale of the development proposed for the site. In terms of architectural language, the proposal presents traditional forms with a variety of modern detailing.

It is acknowledged that the building footprint is considerably large; however, the way it is designed, with a series of wings and located at the lowest part of the site, subservient to the surrounding area, it is considered to be appropriate and in line with the character of the surrounding area.

The submitted visualisations show an improved relationship between the proposal and the surrounding area and how the external appearance of the new development relates to and enhances the character of the place by using appropriate features and materials. View from the entrance clarifies the building's exposed southern west corner, which is successfully articulated and set into the significant level changes whilst punctuated with trees to help frame and soften the building's outlook from the entrance.

Furthermore, the projected wing was reduced to minimise overbearing impacts.

Moreover, it was questioned if a sunken courtyard with rooms at a lower ground floor level was the most appropriate approach for this development which would have to ensure that natural light penetrates all habitable rooms, and a sunlight study was submitted and apparently all rooms meet the minimum recommendation and are considered well-lit.

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Also, the location of the sunken courtyard, facing south, is considered to be the best place to provide a usable outdoor amenity space in terms of solar orientation. As it stands it is felt that there is a missed opportunity to propose a well-designed landscape led external space where the land could be modelled on a more natural and organic way. The proportions of the courtyard as well as the ratio between the height and the width of this space seems claustrophobic and could use some design improvement. The applicant presented at a meeting, images of a similar approach elsewhere which seem to be reasonable and would potentially provide a good quality design.