



PLANNING STATEMENT INCORPORATING DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

**SITE AT : ALSTON LODGE RESIDENTIAL HOME, LOWER LANE,
LONGRIDGE, PRESTON. PR3 2YH**



as at.....July 2019.

For : Alston Lodge Residential Home Ltd

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This planning statement incorporating a design and access statement is to accompany an application made to Ribble Valley Borough Council for the redevelopment of this existing care home site for a new 50 bed care home and 12 close care units together with car parking. As such the application is deemed to be a 'major' application under the terms of article 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure (England) Order 2015 whereby such applications must be accompanied by a design and access statement. The purpose of a design and access statement is as described in paragraph 029 of Planning Practice Guidance which states:

'A Design and Access Statement is a concise report accompanying certain applications for planning permission and applications for listed building consent. They provide a framework for applicants to explain how the proposed development is a suitable response to the site and its setting, and demonstrate that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users. Design and Access Statements can aid decision-making by enabling local planning authorities and third parties to better understand the analysis that has underpinned the design of a development proposal.'

The paragraph goes on further to say that

'The level of detail in a Design and Access Statement should be proportionate to the complexity of the application, but should not be long.'

Accordingly, this statement is in proportion to the scale of development proposed.

2. THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1. This site is located on the south side of Lower Lane, the B6243, approximately 400 metres to the west of its junction with Dilworth Lane (the B5269) and Blackburn Road and some 570 metres from its junction with Chapel Hill to the west. The existing site is in use as a care home for the elderly. The existing buildings on the site comprise Alston Lodge, which is a two storey stone built early C20th detached two storey building with modern extensions to the front and side. There is an outbuilding to the front of this used as an office. There is an established access into the site from Lower Lane that enters into a car parking area to the front of the site.
- 2.2. The site currently comprises a care home that provides on site residential care accommodation for the elderly. From the site there is also operated a community care agency that provides home care services for the elderly. This is operated from the office at

the front of the site. The existing care home provides 16 bedrooms, one of which is a double room and the associated lounge areas, dining areas, kitchens and staff areas normally associated with a care home. The care home employs some 21 staff with about 10 being present at the site during the daytime and 2 at the night time, providing 24 hour care. The outsourcing domiciliary care business employs about 29 staff although these mostly work direct from home to site.

- 2.3 At the rear of the main care home building the site is laid to grass with mature tree planting. The trees are assessed for health and quality as part of these application submissions and the scheme incorporates those recommendations together with new planting where required as replacements.

3 THE PROPOSALS.

- 3.1 What is proposed is that the existing care home building and the front office will be demolished/ removed from the site. The existing trees that are identified as not being suitable for retention in the arboricultural report with this application are also to be removed. In place of the existing buildings, four new buildings are proposed comprising a new 50 bed care home in the main building to provide residential and nursing care, with the other three buildings providing extra care living apartments for supported living, of which there will be 12. New car parking areas will also be provided to serve the new development and these are to be provided in two main areas, sited to provide ready access to the care home and extra care units. There is a large amount of new and replacement tree planting proposed to enhance the site and to act as screening.
- 3.2. Of the new buildings, the care home is to be three stories whilst the other three buildings comprising the extra care units will be two storey. The whole of the development will be operated as one with the extra care units being linked to the care home to provide elderly care.

4 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The site has operated as a care home for the elderly for some 30 years or so and is well-established. The site owners wish to invest in a more up to date care home facility that meets current standards both expected from clientele and that expected from the regulatory registration bodies, the Quality Care Commission (CQC). A new facility, such as that now proposed, can be constructed to meet those standards and enable the site to continue to provide elderly care. The existing building, whilst it has been extended in the 1990's, is dated and as an older building, has inherent problems that make it difficult to adapt it be 'fit for purpose' for current standards. The CQC report for the site made the

following comments:

"Adapting service, design, decoration to meet people's needs

*People's individual needs were met by the adaptation, design and decoration of premises. However, we found some areas were in need of adaptation to ensure people safety was maintained. This included the flooring in one area where there were obscured steps. In addition, we noted the environment needed to be adapted in line with the needs of people living with dementia. The registered manager took immediate action to include signage. They informed us they planned to change the flooring in the home."*extract from Quality Care Commission report for this site 17th May 2019.

4.2. The site owners face continual maintenance problems with the existing building, the main issue being that it is not readily adaptable to deal with dementia treatment, which is now a major need of elderly care provision. In addition, the site owners identify the following as some of the problems with the building currently, although this 'list' is not exhaustive and is not in order of difficulty or cost :

- All the windows and doors require upgrading and replacing with many requiring safety glass
- Flooring need levelling off and new carpets that are dementia friendly throughout the home - all carpets are patterned
- Lack off storage facility for equipment such as hoists, wheelchairs which are therefore trip hazards
- The home has no lift
- Shower rooms and bathrooms lack space for taking hoists in
- Infection control issues mean shower room, personal care facilities and bathrooms need upgrading
- Wiring and plumbing are very old and very expensive to upgrade in the existing facility – they are constant drain on finances to undertake remedial work
- The pump in the cellar requires replacement as during the winter when we get heavy rain it floods
- The home due to the age off the building requires constant maintenance to keep in good repair

4.3 For all of these reasons, the site owners now wish to invest in the site's redevelopment and modernisation, providing more up to date and relevant elderly care. The existing residents at site, for those who wish, will be accommodated within the new care home.

5. PLANNING POLICY POSITION.

National Planning Policy Framework

5.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and

contains a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which it indicates has three dimensions – economic, social and environmental. Paragraph 11 sets out how this presumption is to be applied and indicates that development proposals which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, while going on to say that where it is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

- 5.2 In broad terms the Framework also indicates that plans and decisions need to take local circumstances into account, so that they respond to the different opportunities for achieving sustainable development in different areas. Planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities. Design is part of sustainable development and this includes taking into consideration the effect of development on open spaces. Development should contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, and help to minimise pollution and mitigate/adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy. The Framework adds that Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need.
- 5.3 Paragraphs 124-132 relate to the achievement of well designed places. Paragraph 127 states that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments: function well and add to the overall quality of the area; are visually attractive; are sympathetic to local character and history; establish and maintain a strong sense of place; optimise the potential of the site and create place that are safe, inclusive and accessible.
- 5.4 In respect to guidance for elderly care, Paragraph 001 of the Housing for Older and Disabled People, sets out that providing housing for older people is critical and that providing older people with a better choice of housing to suit the changing needs can help them live independently for longer. Paragraph 006 asks Local Authorities to set clear policies to address the housing needs of groups with particular needs such as older people. Paragraph 010 gives the different types of specialist housing designed to meet the diverse needs of older people. This includes extra care housing or housing with care. Paragraph 012 states that plans need to provide for specialist housing for older people where a need exists. Paragraph 013 does not require Local Authorities to allocate sites for older people's housing, although this would provide greater certainty. Location is however a key consideration and includes factors such as proximity to public transport, amenities, health services and town centres.

The Development Plan.

- 5.5 The Development Plan for the area comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

The Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

- 5.6 The Ribble Valley Core Strategy (CS) was adopted on 16 December 2014. The relevant Key Statement (KS) and Policies (Pol) from that document are outlined below:

KS DS1 Development Strategy. Longridge is a principal settlement where the majority of new development will be focused.

KS DS2 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development. In the determination of planning applications the LPA will reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development detailed in the NPPF.

KS EN2 Landscape. Development should be in keeping with the character of the landscape.

Pol DMG1 General Considerations. Details a number of criteria that will secure better standards of development in respect of design, access, amenity, environment and infrastructure.

Pol DMG2 Strategic Considerations. Requires development proposals in the principal settlements and Tier 1 Villages to consolidate, expand or round-off development and to ensure that it is appropriate in terms of scale.

Pol DMG3 Transport and Mobility. Details requirements of development proposals particularly in respect of transport and accessibility.

Pol DME2 Landscape and Townscape Protection. Development should not have significant harm on landscape features.

There are no policies in the adopted CS that relate to the provision of elderly care.

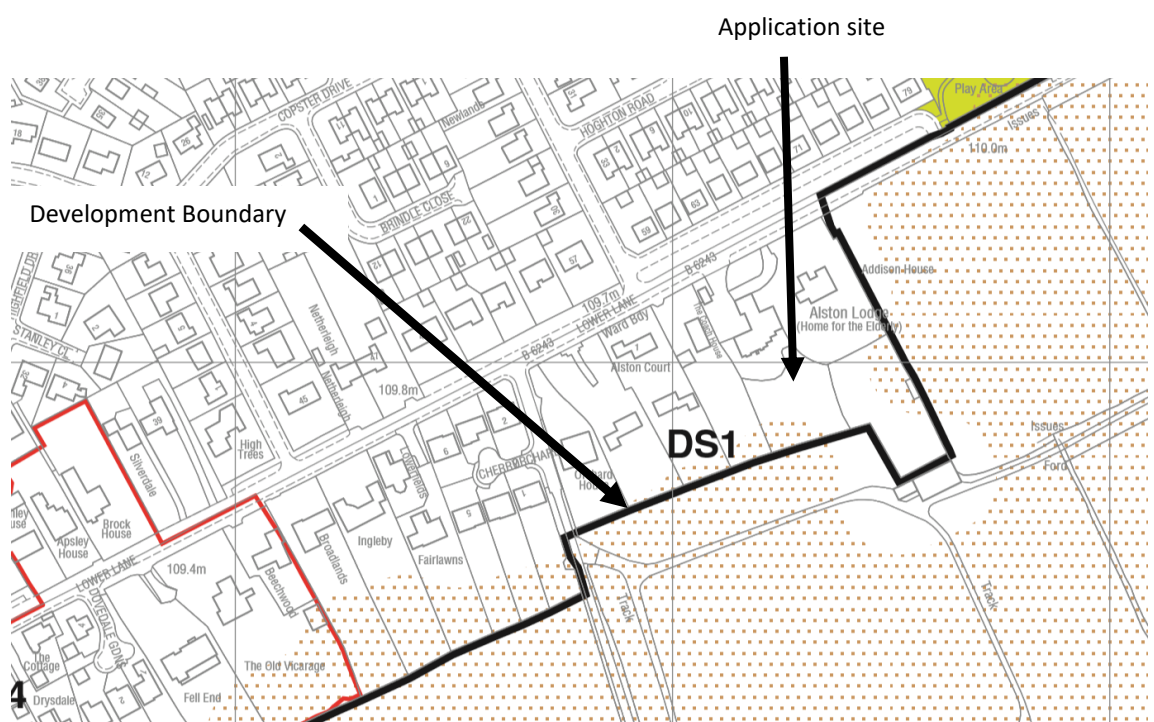
Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan

- 5.7. The Local Plan was adopted in 1998 but all remaining saved policies have now been superseded by the Core Strategy and so it is no longer part of the statutory development plan. However, such time as a revised set of proposals maps are prepared as part of the Housing and Economic Development DPD the Local Plan proposals maps will remain in use.

5.8 The Longridge Proposals map shows this site as being within the Defined Settlement Boundary.

Housing and Development DPD.

5.9. The Housing and Development DPD has been through Examination in Public and the Inspectors decision is awaited at the time of writing. The Plan has reached an advanced stage and therefore can be given weight in the decision-making process. The plan provides detailed implementation of the CS and includes site allocation and settlement boundaries. In this case, the application site is shown as being within the defined Settlement Boundary.



Extract from DPD Proposals Map for Longridge.

6. EVALUATION

Principle of Development

- 6.1. To assess the principle of development, the question to be answered is whether the development proposed would be consistent with the objectives of policies relating to the appropriateness of the location.
- 6.2 Key Statement DS1 of the adopted CS sets out the development strategy for the Borough. This strategy seeks to guide development to the most appropriate

locations through the identification of Principle Settlements and groupings of settlements in a hierarchy based upon existing population size, the availability of, or the opportunity to provide facilities to serve the development and the extent to which development can be accommodated in the local area. Longridge is identified as one of three principal settlements in the Borough which are the higher order settlements in the hierarchy of the CS, where the majority of new development will be located.

- 6.3 To deliver this strategy, the CS does not define a settlement boundary for Longridge but indicates that the settlement boundaries to be utilised are those used in the preceding Ribble Valley Districtwide Local Plan. The application site is shown as being within the settlement boundary of Longridge. This is also the case with the defined settlement boundary shown on the Proposals Map of the not yet adopted Housing and Economic Development DPD.
- 6.4. As such, the proposals are in compliance with the development strategy of the Borough and accordingly attracts the presumption given in the NPPF at paragraph 11 that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

Effect on the character and appearance of the area

- 6.5. The locality of the application site is characterised by low stone boundary walls to the road frontage on the application site side of Lower Road at this point with mature trees. Further to the east there is modern housing estate development. Opposite there are modern houses, which are mostly dormer bungalows. There are limited views into this site from Lower Lane from which the existing buildings on the site can be viewed. In that view there is the cabin building to the front with the main Alston House at the rear. Alston Lodge itself is seen in the context of modern extensions to it at the front.
- 6.6 Alston Lodge to the passer by would have some intrinsic merit and value in its appearance, although this has been somewhat tempered by the presence of the more recent and modern extensions. Whilst the demolition of Alston Lodge is necessary but regrettable, the replacement buildings to be put on the site are of a design that reflects the site's setting. To the front of the site, there will be a visual improvement by replacement of the existing cabin building, currently used as an office, by a more permanent and more appropriately designed stone building, which itself reflects the appearance of a stone built house. The other proposed buildings are set well back into the site and so will not have an undue impact on the street scene.
- 6.7 The demolition of Alston Lodge is required because it cannot be viably adapted to current elderly care standards. Being an older building, it has intrinsic problems to

be overcome and even if it were to be so updated, it could not meet the requirements for modern elderly care, especially dementia related care that is very much a part of the elderly care requirements.

The benefits of the scheme.

- 6.8. Making provision for elderly care is described in paragraph 001 in Planning Practice Guidance as being *critical* and it is generally accepted that the proportion of older people on the population is increasing. It goes on to say that offering people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs reduces cost to the social care and health care systems. That is precisely what these proposals are for, to provide improved elderly care on an existing care home site. It is therefore in the public interest to provide solutions such as these proposals to address the growing and urgent need for elderly persons accommodation and that the needs of elderly persons are met. These proposals will meet some of that need. It will provide for a wider range of personal needs than exists at the current site as it will provide for individual needs in terms of dependency and by providing for extra care independent living in the extra care units. The whole site will be managed by a well established care company at the site who have the desire to achieve the highest care standards for the development.
- 6.9. In addition to the benefits described above, the scheme will also bring further economic and social benefits in terms of construction jobs; longer term employment and training and development in the care professions and related services. Given the site's proximity to the services available in Longridge and the above benefits, the proposals meet the sustainability objectives set out in NPPF.

The effect on trees.

- 6.10 The application site does have a large number of existing trees that provide an amenity to the site. The application is accompanied by an arboriculturally constraints report by Bowland Tree Consultancy. This identifies that that majority of the existing trees are classified as category C, where trees will not usually be retained where they would impose a significant constraint on development and are of low quality and value. Trees that are identified as being of higher value than this are retained in the proposals. There is also extensive new planting proposed that will maintain, with time, the landscape contribution of the site to the character of the area.

7 APPEARANCE

- 7.1 The proposals are for four new buildings on the site, the new care home being three storeys in height and the extra care units being two stories. All of the buildings are to

be a traditional design with stone elevations and features and a slate roof. The buildings are separated by car parking areas and informal access drive. The site is interspersed with trees. The car parking and servicing areas are within the site and will be screened by the proposed new buildings so that from Lower Lane and public vantage points, there will remain views of trees and stone buildings and not servicing and parking areas.

8 SCALE

- 8.1. The proposed buildings are two storey with the main care home building being three storey. The proposals will accommodate up to 50 care home residents and 12 extra care flats. The scheme provides 1 per 10 residents for the parking spaces and 1 space per flat for the extra care units. 27 car parking spaces are proposed.
- 8.2 The extra care units are 5.5 metres to the eaves and 8.1 metres to the ridge. Building 1 only provides for two flats and so is half the size of the extra care flats in buildings 3 & 4 which provide 4 and six flats each. The care home building is 8 metres to the eaves and 10.93 metres to the ridge. Given the grouping and spacing of buildings in the vicinity of the site, this scale of development would not be overly dominant in the streetscape.

9. AMOUNT

- 9.1. The total amount of floorspace proposed in the development is some 3100 sq.m, comprising the main care home, which is some 2244 sq.m, building 1, which is 138 sq.m; buildings 3 which is 394 sq.m and building 4 which is 324 sq.m.

10 USE

- 10.1 The proposed use of the site is as a care home for the elderly with extra care units. Planning Practice Guidance Housing for Older and Disabled People sets out at paragraph 014 that the Use Class into which a particular development may fall is the Local Authority to consider. However, the specific culture of care and support reinforces the terms of occupation of the extra care units thereby unifying the community by access to a dedicated enterprise of specialist care and security for the elderly. On this basis, there are recent appeal Inspector decisions that conclude the Use Class of such proposals is Class C2.

11. ACCESS FOR ALL.

- 11.1 Access is to be gained via a single entrance from Lower Lane, enabling secure

site entry and exit. From the access point there is level access throughout the site with no requirement for the negotiation of steep gradients or level changes.

- 11.2 The extra care units will be full wheelchair accessible in accordance with Lifetime Homes Standards.
- 11.3 Entrances to the buildings will be secure with coded access and well lit and signposted. The entrances will comply with Part M of the Building Regulations for disabled access and will level thresholds, minimum clear widths and be unobstructed.

12 CONCLUDING REMARKS

- 12.1 This site is in a location that complies with the development strategy of the development plan. That is to say, it is within the defined settlement boundary of Longridge, which is a principle settlement in the adopted CS, towards which the majority of new development is to be directed. The proposal is for elderly care, the provision of which the Government says is critical to be provided if the needs of an increasingly elderly population are to be met. It will bring up to date this existing care home facility to meet those needs. It will provide employment and is located close to the facilities provided by Longridge. It makes the most efficient use of this existing site and will manage the existing trees on the site by removing those that are of low quality and by providing replacement planting. The development therefore achieves the aims and objectives of sustainable development, which is the main stated aim of the planning system. In such cases, development should be allowed without delay.

