



Steven Abbott Associates LLP
Chartered Town Planners

PLANNING STATEMENT

Wrightcare Developments Ltd

Construction of a 68 bed Residential Care Home, related
infrastructure and landscaping

Land at Higher Standen, within The Standen Strategic Site

April 2023



REPORT DETAILS

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. We act for Wrightcare Development Ltd (Part of the Eric Wright Group) who propose to construct a 68-bed home and related infrastructure. This application is a joint one with the landowners, the Trustees of the Higher Standen Farm Settlement. This statement deals with the development proposed by Wrightcare.
- 1.2. The Eric Wright Group has constructed the following care home and extra care developments:

Care Homes:

- Broughton House Veteran Care Village, Salford for Broughton House. This is a 64-bed care home with communal facilities and 34 independents assisted living apartments.
- The Gables, Whitehaven. This is one of two new build care homes built for Cumbria County Council. Each scheme accommodates 60 residents.
- Burning Court, Carlisle. This is the second of the Cumbria schemes. It also accommodates 60 residents.
- Bowgreave Rise, Garstang for Lancashire Country Council. This is a 45bed care home facility with specific support for those with dementia.
- Bispham Gardens, Blackpool. This is a 52 bed care home supporting those with specialist needs including, nursing, dementia and end of life care.

Extra Care Projects

- Primrose Extra Care, Chorley – 65 apartment development in Chorley Town Centre for Chorley Council.
- Peachment Place, Extra Care facility, Bury. This is a scheme of 60 extra care apartments for the over 55s, for Bury Metropolitan Borough Council. It also contains residential (staff) quarters and care facilities.

- Holdcroft, Stoke Extra Care, Stoke on Trent for Stoke City Council. This is one of three retirement villages for the over 55s within Stoke Extra Care PFI project. This development comprises 120 two bedrooms flats and 55, one bedroom flats.
 - Oak Priory Extra Care, Stoke-on-Trent of 175 units with a tripartite agreement.
 - Willow Barns Extra Care, Stoke-on-Trent of 75 apartments with a tripartite agreement.
 - Blurton, Stoke Extra Care, Stoke on Trent for Stoke City Council. This scheme provides 75 apartments.
- 1.3. The Eric Wright Group are part of Sapphire in partnership with a number of companies with experience in providing housing projects nationally i.e., Your Housing Group, Kajima Partnership and Seddon Construction.
- 1.4. The Applicants have established that the provision of a residential care home meets an existing need for such facilities in the Ribble Valley and Clitheroe in particular.
- 1.5. We have advised the landowners for 14 years regarding the Standen Strategic Site (SS). Part of the master planned approach towards its development agreed with the Council from the early days was the provision of a 'retirement' living element. In addition, the location generally was seen as an opportunity for economic development alongside the new residential areas.
- 1.6. We also have a very long-standing relationship with the Eric Wright Group which began in the late 1980s. We know of the quality of their developments in their many guises, and their track record for delivering high quality developments with broad benefits.
- 1.7. It is very pleasing therefore, that we are promoting this development which also clearly meets part of the Council's aspirations for the SS.
- 1.8. Some preliminary discussions were held with senior planning officers in the summer of 2022. At that time the site identified for the development by the

Applicant was land at the west end of the frontage of the SS on Pendle Road. This had previously been the subject of informal proposals for a public house/restaurant by other parties but not progressed for commercial reasons.

- 1.9. The planning officers preferred the site forming the subject of this application to the Pendle Road one. They wished to maintain the general disposition of land uses indicated in the amended Parameters Plan and Design and Access Statement for the SS. So, the Retirement Living location was seen as suitable for the proposed development.
- 1.10. The Applicant considered the feedback from the planning officers very closely. The subject site is no longer affected by the outline planning permissions for the site, as they have both expired and thus, the Parameters Plans and Design and Access Statement too (for this part of the SS). However, it is recognised that the officers wish to follow the parameters and design and access statements. This in part, is due to the compliance with both by Taylor Wimpey – who are the residential developer. In addition, cognisance has also been taken of Lancashire County Council's primary school development to the immediate west of the subject site. It involves land which was identified in the revised Parameters Plan and Design and Access Statement as a suitable site for a primary school.
- 1.11. Consequently, the Applicants decided to make this application instead of one for the Pendle Road frontage land.
- 1.12. They are committed to the proposals as demonstrated by this full application, details and all appropriate technical assessments.
- 1.13. We will explain below the proposals are wholly in accordance with relevant national policies and guidance, and the Council's development plan.
- 1.14. It is clearly highly sustainable development in accordance with the development plan and the NPPF such that permission should be granted readily without delay.

2. THE PROPOSALS

2.1. It is proposed to construct a 2-storey building containing the following:

- 68 bed-sitting rooms for residents with en suite bathrooms
- Communal lounges and dining rooms
- Kitchens
- Ancillary administrative and nurses rooms
- Staff rooms
- A Central hub comprising:
 - Library
 - Games area
 - Private bar / lounge
 - Cinema room
- 27 car parking spaces for staff and visitors (3 disabled)
- Servicing road and area
- EV charging points
- Landscaped grounds with walkways and sitting areas

2.2. The plan of the building is V shaped reflecting the shape of the site.

2.3. The two wings would run along North East to South West and North West to South East axes respectively.

2.4. The base of the V (the north end) would contain the lobby and hub described above.

- 2.5. This would be at the end of a vista lined by an avenue of trees alongside a central walkway.
- 2.6. The space between the two main axes would be a courtyard of landscaped gardens
- 2.7. This extensive garden area would wrap around the building to a further extensive garden space on the east of the building
- 2.8. The elevations of the building reflect its institutional use. Notable are the following features:
 - It would be two storeys in height Pitched roofs which would have slate grey tiles to respect the context
 - The roof on the north elevation would contain solar panels
 - A fenestration which has a domestic scale albeit the entrance area (south elevation) would have larger glazed areas to express the function of that part (where privacy would not be an issue) and to provide more natural light
 - The entrance (south) elevation would be faced in reconstituted stone, the rest in a brown brick to reflect local stone shades
 - Openings would have an art stone surround
 - The building would be modelled using hipped roofs and projecting gables on the west, south and east elevations.
 - The gables would be faced with Cedar timber cladding

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1. Planning permission was originally granted for the SS in April 2014.¹ The Parameters Plan indicated an area for Retirement Living and the site is within that. The development is a residential care home so the inhabitants will all be retired people and it is where they will live.
- 3.2. The varied planning permission was granted for the SS in April 2016.²
- 3.3. Since then, Taylor Wimpey have systematically secured reserved matters approvals for Phases 1 to 4 of their development. Those phases extend south and westwards from Pendle Road towards the subject site.
- 3.4. In addition, Taylor Wimpey have secured reserved matters approved for the whole length of the spine road from Pendle Road to Littlemoor. This road is named Higher Standen Drive.
- 3.5. Conditions have been discharged on a phase-by-phase basis.
- 3.6. Reserved matters approval was also secured for the Primary School in 2022 although at the time of writing this Statement a further, full application is under consideration by the Council.
- 3.7. The above means that the following elements of the SS remain to be resolved:
- Residential phases beyond Phase 4 (two in number);
 - The Pendle Road frontage site;
 - The employment use area, to the west of the school site;
 - A local retail/community hub site opposite the subject site;
 - The subject site itself, identified (as explained above) for retirement living;

¹ Outline Planning Permission 3/2012/0942 granted

² Outline planning permission 3/2015/0895 granted 12th April 2016 (Section 73 application to vary)

- 3.8. From the above it can be seen that the proposed development is consistent with the permissive planning regime for the SS.
- 3.9. The Council's officer's feedback has been that it is an appropriate use for the Retirement Living sector, a position we wholly endorse.
- 3.10. The planning history of the site is a material consideration of great weight in this case for decision makers and consultees.

4. PLANNING POLICIES

The Local Plan

- 4.1. The adopted Local Plan for the site is the Core Strategy Local Plan.³ (RVLP).
- 4.2. Planning Law and national planning policy requires that decisions on planning applications must be in accordance with the development plan unless other material considerations outweigh them. The starting point for decision making on this application must, therefore be the RVLP.
- 4.3. The proposals are consistent with The Development Strategy in the RVLP. Key Statement DS1 (Development Strategy) states that new housing developments will be concentrated in the SS. The proposals are for a residential care home, so it is complimentary to the housing focus.
- 4.4. The development would be sustainable and so the presumption in favour provided by Key Statement D52 'Presumption In Favour of Sustainable Development' applies. As such, the application should be approved without delay – as the Statement (DS2) states.
- 4.5. Despite current national guidance (produced since the RVLP was drafted) there is no specific policy in the RVLP for residential care homes. However, there would be no adverse impacts that outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF taken as a whole; or a specific policy in the NPPF which affects such a use. Accordingly, the proposals do not raise any issues regarding that part of the NPPF.
- 4.6. Regarding Key Statement EN3: Sustainable Development and Climate change we comment as follows:

³ Ribble Valley Borough Council – Core Strategy 2008-2028 – a Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version (December 2014)

- Sustainable design, construction, energy conservation and drainage – this is addressed in the Applicant’s Design and Access Statement;
 - Biodiversity has been addressed so this application is supported by an ecological assessment and related surveys.
- 4.7. Although in current use class order terms the proposed development is not an employment use it would provide new employment and contribute to economic development. As such it is in line with Key Statement EC1 which steers employment development to Clitheroe and the A59 corridor.
- 4.8. In addition, it is a site within a mixed-use strategic land release and one which is being developed out in accordance with RVLP policy and the planning permissions granted for the whole SS (albeit expired for the subject site). This key statement states that such proposals for economic development will be considered favourably. Hence, this one should be.
- 4.9. The proposals conform with Policy Key Statement DAA12 ‘Transport Considerations.’ Although the residents would not generate significant traffic movements themselves. Staff, visitors and servicing vehicles will generate insignificant traffic flows when compared against the whole SS (which included a retirement living sector anyway). The traffic assessments carried out before the overall planning permission was granted took account of that sector. Similarly, the Local Plan allocation also took account of the traffic impact of the whole SS site as a mixed use one.
- 4.10. The development would be located in Clitheroe (the focus for development in the Ribble Valley). It is located on the spine road within the SS. There will be a bus stop outside and a cycleway runs in parallel with the spine road. It thus sits in an ideal location given the Ribble Valley context.
- 4.11. So, it is a minor development in transport terms which does not require a Transport Assessment or Statement. However, for information, a Travel Plan has been submitted with this application.

- 4.12. The RVLP has at its centre an area specific policy for the SS.⁴
- 4.13. The policy did not refer to retirement living but refers in general terms to 'community uses'. A residential care home can be described as one too, in general terms.
- 4.14. With regard to Policy DMG1, 'General Considerations' the development meets the criteria as follows:-

Design

1. It is of a high standard of building design. The Applicants architects have taken the context into account.
2. It would be sympathetic to the existing and emerging land uses within the SS and its environs. This is true of its size, intensity and nature as well as scale, massing, style, features and building materials. These aspects are dealt with in the DAS and the architects' drawings.
3. The Applicant and his architects have considered the density, layout and relationship between it and the buildings to be constructed. The visual appearance would be in keeping with the rest of the SS. There are no impacts on landscape character beyond the site. In addition, it would have no impact on existing amenities and bearing in mind it is within that part of the SS yet to be built out.
4. The DAS deals with construction techniques.

Access

5. Traffic and car parking implications have been considered. We have dealt with traffic, which would be light. The proposed car parking is appropriate for a use of the type proposed. The Applicant has been able to draw from

⁴ Paragraph 9.1 The Strategic Site

their experience with other similar schemes, so they know what numbers work. EV charging points would be provided for staff and visitors.

6. The access is part of the infrastructure approved for the SS and is safe. It is of a proportionate size for the light traffic involved.
7. No public rights of way affect the site.

Amenity

8. There is no adverse effect on the amenities of the surrounding area. It is a use appropriate for a residential area.
9. Daylight and privacy issues do not arise given the stand-alone context.
10. The DAS refers to public safety and 'Secured by Design' principles.
11. Air quality is not an issue.

Environment

12. The broader environmental context was considered before planning permission was granted for the whole of the SS. Indeed, an EIA was undertaken in 2011-12. The related ES and appendices supported the original planning application. Furthermore, it was considered by the Council and Local Plan Inquiry Inspector before the SS allocation was confirmed. However, as with the various Taylor Wimpey phases to date and the school site, a bespoke ecological assessment and survey supports this application. The site is not an SSSI (or affected by one), a County Heritage site, Local Nature Reserve, Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Habitat or Species, an SAC, a specially protected area otherwise or a green corridor.
13. The proposals affect a greenfield site (albeit within the SS). They are informed by the ecological assessment. They seek to minimise the impact on biodiversity using sensitive landscaping and mitigation as set out in the assessment.

14. The development is a relatively minor one. The location is such that it does not affect heritage assets or their settings – the nearest being assets at Standen Hall and Littlemoor. The proposed building would not be read against either because of topography and distance.
15. The site is not constrained by any former coal mining activities.

Infrastructure

16. There would be no loss of important open space. The layout of the SS provides extensive tracts of open land as a feature of the master planning of the site and the landowner's requirements.
- 4.15. This is a relatively minor development which does not raise strategic issues. However, it is consistent with Policy DMG2: Strategic Considerations, more particularly, the site is located in Clitheroe, within the SS.
- 4.16. The site is exceptionally well related to proposed bus stops, cycleways, the primary and strategic road network (A59). Therefore, the proposals accord with Policy DMG3: Transport and Mobility. More particularly, regarding the criteria under that policy we can state that:
1. The site is located, as planned, on the SS's spine road (Higher Standen Drive). The latter has direct access on to Pendle Road and the A59 junction close by.
 2. The SS infrastructure includes high quality pedestrian and cycling routes. The footways are adopted or will be where yet to be constructed such that those with reduced mobility can gain access on even surfaces.
 3. The SS is an extension to Clitheroe which offers ready access to modes other than the internal combustion powered private car e.g., bus stops are integral and nearby, good footways, connections with local footpaths and EV chargers will be available.
 4. This proposal does not involve a major traffic generator.

5. Whilst the site is unrelated to a town or village centre, it is opposite land identified for ancillary retail and community uses and next to the Primary School site. As such it would consolidate the hub of community uses envisaged in this part of the SS, as proposed by the approved Parameters Plan and DAS.
 6. The World has changed since this criterion was drafted. Consequently, fewer people 'commute' in the historic manner as more work from home. From where they visit local services and a more frequent basis. In addition, EVs are available as are E-bikes. Both represent sustainable forms of transport.
 7. This criterion is also out of date insofar as EVs and E-bikes are concerned. However, the proposal is for a care home so adequate servicing and parking is essential for some staff, visitors (including medical) and servicing. As we indicated above the Applicant has delivered schemes previously including for local authorities where a sensible balance has been struck as is proposed here.
- 4.17. The proposals do offer an opportunity for the increased use of bus services. Specifically, the SS spine road was planned to accommodate a new bus service which could circulate around the town taking the SS into the route. The spine road is designed to take buses and the western access (on to Littlemoor) has been specifically designed (and recently approved under reserved matters) for bus and emergency vehicles use only. For staff and visitors to the proposed care home this is an exceptional feature of the ongoing SS development. The spine road is being constructed ahead of the proposed housing in phases beyond 4 to enable access to the primary school site and the subject one. Clearly, there is an incentive for RVBC, LCC and bus operators to work together in establishing a bus service at the earliest opportunity for staff, parents and visitors notwithstanding the residents in the rest of the SS.
- 4.18. There would be adequate servicing and car parking facilities commensurate with the use and based on the Applicant's knowledge and experience elsewhere.

- 4.19. Regarding Policy DME1 'Protecting Trees and Woodlands' the site is not constrained by trees and that is reflected by the Council's decision to promote it for retirement living as shown on the approved Parameters Plan.
- 4.20. No ancient woodlands are affected by the proposals. Nor are any veteran or ancient trees.
- 4.21. The subject site relates to a field and it is not proposed to disturb hedgerows other than if essential for infrastructure e.g., sustainable drainage and services.
- 4.22. The proposals do not conflict with Policy DME2: Landscape and Townscapes Protection, as follows regarding the criteria:
1. There are no traditional stone walls affected;
 2. There are no ponds on the site;
 3. The land is former farmland and not an herb rich meadow;
 4. There is no woodland;
 5. There are no copses;
 6. Hedgerows and trees are addressed above;
 7. There is no existing townscape. However, the design of the development has taken account of the SS context. Consequently, cognisance has been taken on the approved Design Code and amended DAS for the Taylor Wimpey parts of the SS, as well as LCC's design for the primary school. However, the proposals are unique within the SS, would be a standalone facility and the design is a function of the building being a high-quality care home.
- 4.23. Policy DME3 concerns site and species protection and conservation. The whole of the SS including the subject site was covered by an EIA in 2011-12 and the ES forms part of the outline planning permission granted in 2014. Biodiversity and ecology were a key part of the EIA given that the whole SS was open countryside

containing trees, hedgerows, ponds, water courses and woods, active agricultural use at the time and consequently biodiversity was affected by related activities.

- 4.24. However, in keeping with the other phases of the SS and the school site (so far) the Applicant's commissioned an ecological assessment by Envirotech⁵. Consequently, this application is supported by it.
- 4.25. Similarly, the heritage assets or the setting of Littlemoor are unaffected.
- 4.26. Consequently, Policy DME4: Protecting Heritage Assets, is not a determinative consideration.
- 4.27. The proposals are relatively minor and will integrate with the wider infrastructure which has been, is being and will be provided for the SS. One of the issues concerns surface water management and so Policy DME6 is relevant.
- 4.28. Water management was, of course, also covered by the EIA in 2011-12 and featured in the ES. The latter formed part of the outline planning permission in 2014. There were no insuperable constraints but SuDS measures were necessary to 'throttle' surface water run-off and particularly towards Pendleton Brook.
- 4.29. As with other environmental issues the subject was considered in the formulation and adoption of the RVLP.
- 4.30. Nevertheless, the details of the proposed drainage arrangements are provided in a Drainage Strategy and Flood Risk Assessment (FRA). This forms part of the submitted planning application. Crucially, there would be no unacceptable risk of flooding on the site or elsewhere. As a consequence, the proposals conform with Policy DME6.
- 4.31. Policy DMB1 is material as it supports business growth and the local economy. The proposals are supported by this permissive policy as follows:

⁵ Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, Envirotech, January 2023

- The proposals involve a use which would contribute to local economic development. This is because it involves the employment of people (approximately 70 in all directly). It would also generate economic activity locally as a result of the purchase of goods and services. These range from food and drink to maintenance and cleaning. In addition, the development involves an investment in Clitheroe of £12.1M. Furthermore, the construction phase itself would employ approximately 100 people over the estimated 72 week construction period of the project and itself generate economic activity in Clitheroe and beyond.
- The proposals are contributing towards a need for bespoke, contemporary residential care homes in Clitheroe and the Ribble Valley more generally (see Section 5, below). This represents economic development in a sector beyond the traditional 'employment' uses.
- It is even more vital that in the current economic climate opportunities such as this should be supported and planning permission granted at the earliest date. This enables the release of the development opportunity and lessens the risk of unforeseen economic changes thwarting the delivery of proposals.

4.32. It can be seen from the above that the proposals are wholly in accordance with the RVLP.

Local Plan – Housing and Economic Development – Development Plan Document (Adopted 2019)

4.33. This part of the Statutory Development Plan is also a material consideration. In the introductory section it identifies the SS given its significance as a focal point for development in Clitheroe.

The Emerging Local Plan Review

4.34. This part of the development plan is at too early a stage to be treated as a material consideration. However, there is no reason to believe that it would

undermine the roll out of the rest of the SS or in any way the suitability of the subject site for a residential care home.

Clitheroe Neighbourhood Planning

- 4.35. There is currently no neighbourhood plan.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021

- 4.36. Like the development plan, planning law requires this document to be considered for decision making.
- 4.37. We set out below various paragraphs which support the proposed development and cover technical aspects.
- 4.38. Paragraph 11 engages so there is a presumption in favour of this sustainable development. As such sub-paragraph c) applies and as a consequence the application should be approved without delay.
- 4.39. Paragraphs 39–46 of the NPPF concern pre-application advice submissions. The Applicants chose not to make a pre-application submission in this case given the planning history and RVLP position on the SS. They have had a brief dialogue with senior officers as part of the ongoing liaison between the Council, developers and their agents about the SS. We explained the officers' position about the merit (in principle and informally) of the subject site for a residential care home.
- 4.40. Paragraph 81 concerns building a strong, competitive economy. The proposals would contribute to the growth of the local economy.
- 4.41. The proposals involve a locational requirement for a bespoke facility. As a consequence, paragraph 83 is also supportive. Although the site is in a built-up area, Clitheroe sits in an extensive rural hinterland. As a result, the proposals conform with paragraph 84 d. They would contribute to the prosperity of the rural area around Clitheroe and provide a service.

4.42. The proposals are for a residential care home. Consequently, section 8 in the NPPF is a material consideration also as it is entitled 'Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities.' Paragraph 92 is met as the proposals:

1. Promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise have come into contact with each other. In this case that is a benefit of a mixed-use development (SS) and the nature of this care home.
2. It would be safe and accessible, so that crime and the fear of crime are minimised for residents and staff. The residents would enjoy a good quality of life including internal and external community cohesion. Staff and visitors would benefit from the attractive, well-designed property with legible pedestrian and cycle routes; and high-quality public space being provided throughout the Standen SS.
3. They would enable and support as healthy a lifestyle, as much as the residents regimes would allow. The proposed facilities would address a specific local health and well-being need. For staff and visitors, the safe and accessible green infrastructure within the SS would be beneficial. As will the layout which encourages walking and cycling.

4.43. The criteria under paragraph 93 are also met by the proposals as follow:

1. There would be community facilities/services which would enhance the sustainability of the local community and the residential environment;
2. The facilities would enhance the health and well-being of the local community and the elderly specifically.
3. This community facility would be integral to the SS and its residents and neighbourhood.

4.44. Section 9 in the NPPF concerns sustainable transport. This is a relatively minor proposal on a site within the approved SS. Consequently, its credentials for

sustainable transport were tested and accepted at various stages over the past 12 years. In particular it was at the following stages:-

- Outline planning permission 2014;
- Outline planning permission (varied) 2015;
- RVLP 2014;
- Reserved matters approval;
- The Primary School permission

4.45. So, the principle has been long acknowledged. In terms of the detail, the proposals meet paragraph 104 c) as opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport would be available because of the excellent infrastructure being provided throughout the SS.

4.46. The proposals are for a residential care home in a predominantly residential neighbourhood. In the context of paragraph 108 maximum parking standards are unjustified. This is because the development is a relatively minor one within the SS and where the operator knows what the appropriate level of car parking should be. The presence of the excellent pedestrian and cycling facilities for staff and visitors is also pertinent. Furthermore, the site is on a spine road designed to accommodate a town's bus services in Clitheroe – with a bus stop planned outside the site.

4.47. Regarding paragraph 111 the minor access is a planned one onto a spine road designed to contemporary standards. There are no road safety issues as a consequence.

4.48. Even though the development is a relatively minor one, paragraph 112 is met for the following reasons:-

- (a) Pedestrian and cycling facilities are integral to the design of the layout but in this case materially benefit from the quality of the related infrastructure within the SS, i.e., it is realistic to expect staff and visitors to

walk, cycle or use E-bikes. Similarly, the provision of infrastructure to facilitate a cross town bus service with a bus stop outside makes the use of buses easy.

- (b) The proposed development is designed to accommodate disabled people whether they are residents, staff, visitors or services.
- (c) The scheme is also designed to be safe, secure and attractive so that (even at this small scale) conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles are minimised.
- (d) The layout enables the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles, and;
- (e) Has EV charging points readily available for staff and visitors.

4.49. As the proposals are minor and would not generate significant traffic movements, a travel plan (as described in paragraph 113), is not essential. However, one is being offered with this planning application⁶.

4.50. Section 12 in the NPPF concerns the achievement of well-designed places. Regarding paragraph 128 a Design Code was a requirement of the outline planning permissions granted. One was subsequently approved for the SS and applies for the whole of it (insofar as Taylor Wimpey's interest is concerned). So, technically no such document affects the subject site. However, cognisance should be taken of the approved Design Code and, indeed, the amended DAS when considering contextual matters. This is the approach which has been taken by the architects.

4.51. Regarding paragraph 130, the development would ensure that:

- (a) It would function well and enhance the quality of the area.

⁶ Travel Plan, Mode Transport Planning, February 2023.

(b) It is visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping.

(c) It considers the SS context and its particular design ethos.

It would consolidate a strong sense of place comprising the cluster of retirement living, community service and employment uses envisaged in the Parameters Plan approved for the SS. The design does utilise a building type and materials which would be attractive, welcoming and a distinctive place to live in, work and visit.

(d) It would be an efficient use of the land.

(e) It would be safe, inclusive and accessible and would promote the health and the well-being of elderly people. It would have a high standard of amenity, foster community cohesion and resilience.

4.52. Paragraph 131 is met by the SS scheme being implemented by Taylor Wimpey. The scheme contains a combination of approaches for tree planting and extensive tracks of open land to enhance the opportunities for so doing.

4.53. The application involves a well-designed, high quality bespoke development.

4.54. As such paragraph 134 engages and significant weight should be placed on the design which promotes high levels of sustainability and would raise the standard of design more generally in the area, as it would fit well with the overall form and layout of the surrounding SS.

4.55. Regarding the concerns expressed in paragraph 135 the proposals are not speculative but real and are what the Applicant wishes to build.

4.56. Section 14 in the NPPF is about the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change. The site is not one where there is a high risk of flooding. However, flooding occurs along the Pendleton Brook corridor to the south. In line with the rest of the SS, the development uses a SuDs scheme which ensures greenfield discharge rates. This application is supported by a Flood Risk

Assessment and Drainage Strategy. The DAS also refers to that aspect of the design.

4.57. Section 15 in the NPPF concerns the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. The proposals are in accordance with paragraph 174 as:-

- (a) They take account of biodiversity
- (d) Minimise impacts on and provide a net gain for biodiversity

4.58. Regarding paragraph 180 it is met as follows:-

- (a) There would be no significant harm to biodiversity
- (c) There is no loss of an irreplaceable habitat
- (d) Improvements to biodiversity in and around the building and hard surfaced areas are being proposed as part of the design.

4.59. From the above it can be concluded that the proposed development is wholly in accordance with the NPPF.

National Planning Practice Guidance

National Design Guide (NDG)

4.60. Whilst a relatively minor and planned development within the SS, the Applicant's architects have taken the NDG into account. More particularly, the ten characteristics in it which are as follows:-

- 1 Context
- 2 Identity
- 3 Built form
- 4 Movement (at site level)
- 5 Nature
- 6 Public spaces (the relationship with the street)

- 7 Users
- 8 Homes and buildings
- 9 Resources
- 10 Lifespan.

- 4.61. Clearly, some of the above are aimed at larger developments or more complicated scenarios. Those characteristics have been applied proportionately.
- 4.62. The Guidance (NPPG) website has a specific section concerning housing for older and disabled people.
- 4.63. It provides clarity on the definition of residential care homes. They (as is proposed in this case) have individual rooms within a residential building and provide a high level of care, meeting all activities of daily living. They do not usually include support services (as here) for independent living. This type of housing can also include dementia care homes.⁷ The development will provide rooms for such residents.
- 4.64. The NPPG also states that decision makers should consider the location and viability of development when assessing planning applications for specialist housing for older people.⁸
- 4.65. In this case the application does not raise viability issues. However, the location is important. Research undertaken by the Applicant and others (see Section 5) has established that there is a shortage of such facilities in Clitheroe and its environs. This is despite the age profile of the local population which has a higher-than-average population of people over retirement age.
- 4.66. We are informed by the Applicant that what facilities are available locally are mainly not purpose-built but involve the conversion of former dwellings. There is

⁷ Paragraph: 010 Reference ID: 63-010-20190626

⁸ Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 63-016-20190626

a planning application under consideration for another residential care home by another party and this is also referred to in Section 5.

4.67. The location of the site within the SS in Clitheroe is ideal for such a development.

4.68. National planning practice guidance also refers to the importance of 'Inclusive Design'⁹. As the guidance promotes, the scheme took account of the need for inclusivity from the outset.

4.69. The bespoke nature of the design and its setting within the SS means that it is in a highly accessible location as described above. The issues listed were considered when the Applicant was looking into opportunities in Clitheroe. We can count on how they relate to the application site as follows:

- The location of the site in the SS and its infrastructure will enable ease and comfort of movement on foot and by other modes between the home, services and town centre (this applies to the more mobile residents [often accompanied by carers]), staff and visitors.
- The proposed bus service route will run past the site and a bus stop is planned there.
- As a bespoke, new-build scheme, parking spaces for setting down are in close proximity to the entrance.
- The footway system is contemporary and takes the needs of elderly people into account including smooth footways and dropped crossings. This is important for mobility, e.g., when carers or family or friends assist or walk with elderly people in wheel chairs.
- The entrance will be clearly identified and will achieve a suitable level access from the external paving

⁹ Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 63-017-20190626

- The SS has generous areas of open space including step free spaces and seating.
- 4.70. National planning practice guidance refers to principles set out by the Housing our Ageing Population Panel for Innovation (HAPPI). The design relates to those as follows:
- The building's space and flexibility are enshrined in its bespoke design as a specialist facility.
 - Its orientation, layout and fenestration are designed to maximise daylight in the building and related, shared spaces.
 - It is an adoptable 'care ready' design – being one specifically created as a residential care home.
 - It includes the positive use of circulation space in and around the building.
 - The facilities internally include some shared spaces and 'hubs'.
 - Plants, trees and the natural environment are part of the plan and are illustrated by the planting proposals and landscape design.
 - Energy efficiency and a sustainable design are subjects dealt with in the DAS.
 - Storage for belongings for residents and staff is included in the design. Space for bicycles and E-bikes is also provided for staff.
 - The external surfaces involve some shared and 'home zones'.
- 4.71. The above passages from national guidance demonstrate that the Applicant's proposals comply with it.

5. THE LOCAL ADULT CARE CONTEXT

5.1. It is not necessary to demonstrate a local need for the proposed development in planning policy terms. This is because the site is located within the Strategic Site (SS). It, in turn forms an extension to the allocated built-up area which comprises Clitheroe.

5.2. However, we felt it would be helpful to the Council, consultees and anyone else taken an interest to provide the following background information.

Lancashire County Council's Adult Social Care document ¹⁰

5.3. This document sets out the County Council's (LCC) understanding of demand for care and how that may change over time.

5.4. LCC's vision is to support people to live as independently and healthily as possible, with the right level of care and the right amount of time for themselves and their carers. The proposed development is designed for people who cannot cope alone but affords them a high quality of living environment. This by way of professional support, high quality design (internal and external) and a broad range of options for activity within the home. The landscaped gardens in such a beautiful part of the country enhance the quality of life by providing scope for fresh air and exercise.

5.5. LCC's priorities are set out in the document. The proposed development is consistent with them as it would enable proportionate independence for people who are unable to cope at home. The provision of the proposed accommodation enhances the choice of facilities available locally. The choice is limited, at present, as we explain in the sub-section below.

5.6. The following Lancashire 'Key Facts' from the document are noteworthy:

¹⁰ Adult Social Care – Market Position Statement, Lancashire County Council, 2022

- It is forecast that those aged 75–84 will increase by 38.4% between 2016 and 2026. Those over 85 will increase by 25%;
 - Limiting long term illnesses are forecast to increase by 13%;
 - Falls, requiring hospital admissions, by 11%;
 - Dementia by 15%;
 - Lancashire has a higher proportion of older people than the English average.
- 5.7. LCC, as part of our local government, is facing challenges to its financial position. The provision of privately funded care facilities takes some of the financial pressure burden away.
- 5.8. Across Lancashire the supply of specialist dementia provision is not keeping up with demand. The proposed development provides for dementia patients. 34 of the 68 rooms are allocated for such people.
- 5.9. There is a lack of available placement for adults under the age of 65 including those with physical disabilities, mental health and hearing disabilities. The development would be appropriate and available to that group.
- 5.10. The LCC document refers to the Housing with Care and Support Strategy (2018–2025). It proposes that housing care and support facilities should be purpose built with 24:7 care. The proposed development provides such facilities.
- 5.11. Furthermore, the facilities enable residents to live with a high degree of independence within their internal community.
- 5.12. LCC note that by the time of publication (last year) 21 properties had been retired across Lancashire due to no longer meeting new exacting standards and expectations. This led to a reduction in available homes. The proposed development is designed to meet all contemporary standards. It will make up for the loss of some of these homes county-wide.

- 5.13. The need to provide accommodation for people with dementia is a common theme in the document. The proposed development would cater for some of them.

Recent Need Information

- 5.14. We are aware of a current planning application (at the time of writing) by Muller Homes for a care home at the Pendle Mill site in Pendle Road, Clitheroe.¹¹
- 5.15. The application documents are available as public ones on the Council's website.
- 5.16. The Muller application includes a 'Care Homes Need Assessment.' The assessment contains various statements germane to this planning application as follows:-
- The Council's duties towards adult care and support;
 - The need for both the quantity and quality of care homes;
 - The target area chosen (which involves a centre relatively close to the proposed development by our client) is relevant for this application. The population in that area is relatively old – those over the age of 85 are 52% higher than the national profile and set to increase in number by 50% by 2035. Need is seen as critical nationally and so even worse in the target area;
 - The inadequacies of dated and converted homes (highlighted by COVID 19 pandemic);
 - There is currently no modern accommodation fully designed and to meet the needs of Clitheroe's elderly position;
 - Borough-wide it is stated that there is a shortfall of 201 en-suite bedrooms now increasing to 251 in 2025;

¹¹ Planning Application ref: 3/2022/0632

- In the target area identified by Muller's consultant, there is an under supply now of 114 rooms which will increase to 135 by 2025;
- 5.17. It is not advocated by us or the Muller application that there is a need criterion in planning policy terms for their proposed development. Nor is that our client's case. However, Muller's research reveals that in adult care terms, there is a pressing need for high quality care homes with en-suite bedrooms.
- 5.18. Their work also identifies the need to provide space for those with dementia.
- 5.19. Finally, the Muller application is not stating that it meets the local residential care need. Instead, it would make a significant contribution towards the local shortfall, as would our client's scheme.
- 5.20. In conclusion, on this aspect there is recent specialist evidence to confirm the Applicant's belief that Clitheroe will benefit from purpose built residential care homes with dementia provision and en-suite bathrooms incorporated.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Community Involvement

- 6.1. The site is within an undeveloped part of the SS approved for retirement living. The proposed primary school site next door is the only neighbour currently. Consequently, the Applicant has not undertaken community involvement.

Noise

- 6.2. A Noise assessment¹² has been submitted with this application.
- 6.3. There are no aspects which demand special measures.

Archaeology

- 6.4. University¹³ in concert with the Council's consultants, Lancashire County An archaeological assessment has been carried out by Salford Council's Historic Environment Team (LCCHET).
- 6.5. It is anticipated that two, 20 x 20-metre-long strips, map and excavation trenches may be required to establish the presence or not of buried archaeological remains of interest.

Site Investigation

- 6.6. The application is supported by a Phase II Geoenvironmental Site Assessment¹⁴. No unusual factors were identified.

¹² Noise Assessment, Environoise, December 2012

¹³ Archaeological Desk Based Assessment by the Salford Environmental Consultancy, February 2023

¹⁴ Phase II Geoenvironmental Site Assessment by e3p, February 2023

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1. The Eric Wright Group have considerable experience in delivering high quality developments in Lancashire and beyond. They have constructed many residential care schemes.
- 7.2. The principle of retirement living on the site was established in 2014 and 2015 through the outline planning permissions.
- 7.3. Pre-application discussions with senior planning officers established that they preferred the proposed development to be located on the application site and not the Pendle Road frontage. This, because it was shown for retirement living as part of a community/service hub in the Parameters Plan and DAS.
- 7.4. The proposals are in accordance with the development plan, the RVLP.
- 7.5. They are consistent with the NPPF and national guidance.
- 7.6. As a sustainable development and especially as the principle has been approved, planning permission should be granted without delay.
- 7.7. The proposed residential care home will contribute to the local economy and would employ about 70 people.
- 7.8. The area lacks bespoke, purpose-built residential care homes with en-suite facilities or for dementia residents but has an above average elderly population. So, it is helping to meet a need.
- 7.9. The design of the development is of a high quality, typical of Eric Wright developments and will enhance the neighbourhood.
- 7.10. It will consolidate the envisaged hub by adding to the primary school and perhaps stimulate interest for other employment/service uses in that part of the SS.
- 7.11. The proposals do not adversely affect any other interest of acknowledged importance.

- 7.12. We hope that the proposals will be welcomed by the Council and we respectfully request that permission is granted at the earliest opportunity.
- 7.13. We welcome a discussion with officers about any proposed conditions precedent soon.