

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

369 Blackfen Road, London, DA15 9NJ

Change of use from residential to a hostel under Sui Generis and single storey rear extension

1.0 Introduction

This statement supports the planning application for the change of use from residential to a hostel, under Sui Generis, and a single storey rear extension at 369 Blackfen Road, London, DA15 9NJ. The statement comprises five sections: the first section is the introduction; the second section describes the site and surrounding properties; section three gives a description of the application proposal scheme; section four sets out responses to the key design and access issues raised in the Pre-application (21/01351/PREAPP); and the fifth section takes the form of a Sustainability Statement.

2.0 Existing Site, Surrounding Area and Property

The application property comprises a two-storey detached, twentieth century building, located on the northern side of Blackfen Road, within a site that measures 275m² in area. The property is not listed nor does it fall within a Conservation Area.

The property is constructed from yellow/ cream rendered walls, with a tiled roof and UPVC/ aluminium casement windows. At the back of the property there is a single-storey rear extension that spans roughly halfway across the building. In front of the property there is an area of hard standing with room to park three vehicles, with two areas of dropped curb.

Please refer to photographs on the following pages, for views of the site and the surrounding buildings:



Views from Blackfen Road, looking at the front of the property



Aerial views of the rear of the property



Aerial view of the front and side of the property

3.0 The Application Proposal (please refer to drawings: D11, D12A, D13, D14, D15, D16, D17A, D18A and D19)

The aim has been to create the provision of residential accommodation and high quality architecture that is sensitive to the amenities of the surrounding buildings. To this end, the following design considerations have been included within the scheme:

3.1 PROPOSED USAGE OF THE PROPERTY

- The property will be used as short stay accommodation for people with a Mental Health need. Average length of stay will be 72 hours. These people will be referred to Hestia by Oxleas NHS Trust, following triage by NHS staff. All referrals will be planned.
- The service will be operational 24/7 365 days per year. There will be a minimum of 2 staff on site at any one time. These staff will not be sleeping on site.
- There will be CCTV on site and two parking spaces on the driveway. These spaces will not be designated, but are likely to be used by staff and those dropping off residents such as taxi drivers.

3.2 ROOM SIZES

- Rooms have been sized in accordance with the London Borough of Bexley's 'General Property Standards for Property Licensing' 'Additional Standards for HMO Property' as follows:
- The scheme includes 7 bedrooms, each with an area that exceeds the minimum standard of 6.52m² for single rooms in shared houses.
- Bedrooms 3 and 4 have en-suite bathrooms.
- There are 2 communal bathrooms, each with area in excess of 3m² and an additional 2 WCs. Each of the communal bathrooms will benefit from natural light.
- The hostel will include a living room of 14m² and kitchen/ diner of 17.6m².
- There will be an office for support staff of 10.8m² with close access to WC facilities.
- In order to provide natural light and a view out to Bedroom 2, the scheme includes a small window to the proposed west elevation. The window will be UPVC/ aluminium framed to match the existing windows; it will also match existing windows in terms of scale and proportion.

3.3 SINGLE STOREY EXTENSION DESIGN

- In order to provide a generously sized living space, the scheme includes a modestly sized, single storey, rear extension. The extension is restricted to 2m in projection from the existing rear wall of the building and the height of the extension is 2.88m (less than 3m) at the boundary with no. 371 Blackfen Road.
- Materials of the extension will match existing, with painted rendered walls and UPVC/ aluminium framed double glazed doors and windows.

3.4 TRANSPORT AND REFUSE CONSIDERATIONS

- Situated at the front of the property, the application scheme includes:
 - 2 No. parking bays that are served by 2 existing dropped curbs;
 - 8 No. covered cycle spaces;
 - Refuse storage, with an allowance for 5 No. 40 litre bins that can be a mixture of recycling bins and regular waste bins.

4.0 Pre-Application 21/01351/PREAPP, feedback received 30th June 2021

In order to establish a dialogue with the Planning Department at the London Borough of Bexley, it was decided to pursue a pre-application submission – with the aim of developing a scheme that would receive the support of the Planning Department at full planning application stage.

4.1 SUMMARY OF HIGH-LEVEL FEEDBACK

The key the feedback from the officer's pre-application report was that, providing that an application was made for a change of use from residential to a hostel under Sui Generis, rather than for a conversion to an HMO property, the application '*would be considered acceptable in principle*'. Furthermore, in terms of the proposed single-storey, rear extension '*due to the location of the rear extension it would not be visible from the streetscene and as such would not have a significant impact on the local area*' and also '*due to the modest scale and form of the structure it is also not considered that it would be detrimental to the existing building*' and also '*due to the position of the structure it is not considered that it would have any additional impact on the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers in terms of loss of light, overbearance or overshadowing.*'

The pre-application also confirms the following:

'The proposal anticipates one bathroom and two WCs at ground level and one bathroom and two en-suite bathrooms at first floor level. In addition, a separate kitchen / diner and living room would be provided that are sufficiently separated. This would be considered acceptable for a facility of this size and occupancy level.'

'The unit would be provided with a rear garden that would measure approximately 100m². The garden would offer raised beds, a shed and a summer house for use by the staff and occupants of the facility. It is considered that this provision would be acceptable for the maximum occupancy level of the unit.'

'The proposal would increase the number of habitable rooms within the property. However, the proposed internal reorganisation of the habitable rooms would not result in an increased chance of overlooking or loss of privacy to the neighbouring properties above that which

would be expected from a typical residential layout.'

'With regard to noise, the total number of occupants within the property would be 7 plus staff members. It is not considered that the number of occupants or use of the service would cause a significant level of harm to the amenities of the surrounding residential properties.'

4.2 ADDITIONAL DESIGN AND ACCESS ISSUES

Set out below are additional design and access feedback issues from the planning officer, in blue italics and an explanation of how the current, application scheme, addresses each outstanding issue, in bullet point form:

'Officers would still expect to see any proposal provide residential accommodation of a high standard that would not be to the detriment of future occupants of the property. As a very minimum, the standards that were applicable to the use of the property as an HMO would apply.'

- Please refer to section 3.1 of this report that confirms that rooms have been sized in accordance with the London Borough of Bexley's 'General Property Standards for Property Licensing' 'Additional Standards for HMO Property'.

'Bedroom 2 has no access to natural light. This would give rise to an unacceptable quality of internal living space that would not be supported in any future application. If you provide a window to the western elevation of the building as we discussed, this issue may be overcome.'

- Please refer to section 3.1 of this report and drawing D18A, illustrating new window to Bedroom 2 that will be UPVC/ aluminium framed to match the existing windows; it will also match existing windows in terms of scale and proportion.

'As the facility would provide residential accommodation it would need to provide up to one parking space on site, which would be easily achievable.'

- Please refer to section 3.3 of this report and drawing D11, illustrating 2 No. parking bays that are served by 2 existing dropped curbs, located at the front of the building.

'In accordance with Table 10.3 of the London Plan, covered and secure storage for 8 bicycle spaces would need to be provided on site.'

- Please refer to section 3.3 of this report and drawing D11, illustrating 8 No. covered cycle spaces, located at the front of the building.

'a storage area will need to be provided for refuse and recycling. The most convenient location would be to situate this to the front of the building.'

- Please refer to section 3.3 of this report and drawing D11, illustrating Refuse storage, situated at the front of the building, with an allowance for 5 No. 40 litre bins that can be a mixture of recycling bins and regular waste bins.

5.0 Sustainability Statement

Sustainability issues have been central to the development of the application scheme, with the key design considerations set out below:

- The refurbishment scheme will be carried out to high standards in terms of energy efficiency to meet current Building Regulations and will accord with the council's stipulations on carbon dioxide emission levels and water uses targets. Dual flush toilets will be specified.
- New thermal elements, windows, doors and rooflights, will be specified to a high standard and, at a minimum, will comply with Part L of the Building Regulations: Conservation of Fuel and Power. All windows will be double-glazed.
- The heating system will comply with Part L of the Building Regulations and the existing PV and solar water heating arrays will be maintained. Low energy use LED type lighting will be used throughout the home.