



ASTILL

144 New Walk
Leicester
LE1 7JA

Dated: 22nd May 2023

Our Reference: A1894-03-01

Your Reference:

Development Management,
Blaby District Council,
Council Offices,
Narborough,
Leicester,
LE19 2EP

Dear Case Officer,

RE: Planning Statement

Description	Two storey side extension, first floor rear extension and installation of lift; alterations.
Application Type	Full
Location	The Chataway Care Home, 4 East Avenue, Whetstone, Leicester, LE8 6JG

This Statement has been prepared by Astill Planning Consultants on behalf of our client, to accompany a planning application for extensions to The Chataway Care Home. The extensions will provide additional bed spaces and a lift to facilitate easier access between the ground and first floors. It will enhance the standard of care for and quality of life of residents.

1.0 Introduction:

1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the proposals for the application site and to provide a planning justification for these. This statement also incorporates the following:

- Analysis of the application site and the surrounding area.
- Review of relevant national and local planning policy as well as other material considerations
- Planning Assessment assessing the proposals against planning policy and other considerations.

2.0 Application Site



Figure 1 - Application Site Aerial Photograph

- 2.1 The application site is ca. 463m² and within the settlement boundaries of Whetstone and is near to Blaby. Whetstone is identified as a Local Centre and Blaby is identified as a Town Centre. Across these two settlements the site has a high standard of access to a range of services, shops, and facilities to fulfil everyday needs.
- 2.2 Within Whetstone, the application site is positioned off East Avenue in Whetstone. This is a primarily residential street with a visual mix of residential dwelling houses, including single and two-storey properties. As well as detached and pairs of semi-detached properties. Car parking is typically facilitated by private drives to the front of properties.
- 2.3 The application site is occupied by the Chataway Care Home. This is a two-storey building with single-storey elements. The original building was a residential dwelling prior to its change of use and subsequent extensions over time. The property features a principal facing gable end and double canted front facing bay window and is finished in a mixture of buff-brick, render, grey roof-tiles and timber effect UPVC Windows and doors.
- 2.4 To the front of the building is a bin store area and off-street car parking for staff and visitors to the home. To the rear, the Chataway Care Home has an area of outside amenity space. The site is neighbored by the detached dwellings at numbers 6 East Avenue and 2 East Avenue. To the rear, the site is neighbored by terraced properties on Trinity Road (numbers 9, 11, 11a, & 11b Trinity Road)
- 2.5 The application site has excellent public transport connectivity with bus stops available on Enderby Road and Victoria Road. It is also centrally located in relation to a range of other settlements within the hierarchy, including the City of Leicester, Oadby, Narborough and Blaby.

3.0 Planning History:

- 3.1 4 East Avenue was originally a private residential dwelling house before secure planning permission in 1983 to be used as a residential care home. Through the 1980's and 1990's successive planning permissions were secured for the gradual enhancement of the care home.

Presented below in tabulated form is pertinent planning history for the application site and proposed development:

Reference:	83/1449/1/PY
Approved:	17 th February 1984
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Use of Private House as Home for Elderly People.
Reference:	85/0523/1/PC
Approved:	06 th June 1985
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Change of Use from Garage to Owners Accommodation.
Reference:	86/1041/1/PB
Approved:	04 th September 1986
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Proposed Laundry Room at Rest Room.
Reference:	89/1710/1/PX
Refused:	23 rd January 1990
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Ground Floor Front & Rear Extensions and First Floor Side Extension to Rest Home.
Reference:	90/0682/1/PX
Approved:	23 rd January 1990
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Ground Floor Front & Rear Extensions to Rest Home (<i>Resubmission</i>).
Reference:	90/0682/1/PX
Approved:	23 rd January 1990
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Ground Floor Front & Rear Extensions to Rest Home (<i>Resubmission</i>).
Reference:	92/0720/1/PX
Approved:	17 th September 1992
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Proposed First Floor Side Extension
Reference:	92/0720/1/PX
Approved:	17 th September 1992
Address:	4 East Avenue, Whetstone
Description:	Conservatory to the rear of rest home.

4.0 Residential Care Home Operation

- 4.1 Chataway Care Home is a 'residential care home'. People in the care home receive accommodation and nursing or personal care as a single package under one contractual agreement. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) regulates both the premises and the care provided. Chataway has a manager registered with the Care Quality Commission.
- 4.2 The existing operation provides personal care for up to 14 people aged 65 and over. There is parking at the front of the property and a secure garden area with a seated area to the rear. People have individual bedrooms on the ground and first floor. People are supported to have maximum choice and control of their lives and staff support them in the least restrictive way possible and in their best interests; the policies and systems in place at Chataway support this service and practice.
- 4.3 A 2019 Care Quality Commission Inspection report gave the Chataway Care Home a 'Good' grading and noted that:

"Care was provided with kindness and compassion and people's independence was promoted. Staff ensured that people were supported to maintain their dignity and respected their right to privacy. People stayed in touch with people who were important to them and visitors could come to the home at any time"

- 4.4 Chataway Care Home is committed to providing the best possible care and living environment for residents. In recent years the care home has put in place a scheme of enhancement which has seen continuous improvements to the quality of life of residents. These improvements are reflected in the highly positive Care Quality Commission Inspection reports. The average age of residents is 87.
- 4.5 **Below are key points relating to the operation of Chataway Care Home which are pertinent for this planning application:**

- The average of residents is 87. No residents drive.
- The home receives one food deliver a week. Refuse collection once a week.
- One cleaning materials and general medical supplies delivery once a month.
- No HGVS visit this site.
- All visitors are allowed to attend the site at any time by appointment.
- The home has never received complaints from neighbours.

- 4.6 The existing operation does not cause a detrimental impact to surrounding uses or the surrounding highway network. Chataway Care Home is a responsible operator which aims to create a typical 'family home like' environment. Therefore, the patterns of activity and movement are not dissimilar in any way to the primary surrounding C3 dwelling house use.
- 4.7 The existing operation and use are well established as demonstrated in the planning history; having been in operation since 1983. It has cared for and supported several generations of families from the Wheatstone Parish and wider Leicestershire area. It is truly a community facility which supports the goal of healthy and safe communities.

5.0 Proposed Development:

5.1 The proposed development is for first floor rear extensions and ground and first floor side extension. Additionally, the proposal also includes a front extension and alterations to the roofscape. These extensions facilitate alterations to the general arrangement of the care home and will provide 2 new bedrooms. This will take the total number of bedrooms from 14 to 16. The front extension provides a new platform lift.

5.2 The proposal is required because:

- The home continuously operates at maximum capacity and currently has a waiting list.
- The proposals provide a large communal day room which is configured to provide a larger communal open space. This will improve the living environment with a closer relationship with the kitchen.
- The larger main space will be easier for staff to attend to residents and for activities to take place. It will provide opportunities for activities which will improve the quality of life of residents.
- The reconfiguration provides the opportunity for more advanced modern facilities to be installed.
- The proposals ensure private access to all bedrooms (residents will not have to walk through other resident's rooms). Four rooms within the care home are currently cojoined.
- Residents are facing more complex health and mobility difficulties. The lift will assist with residents who struggle with entering and exiting the stairlift. The lift will assist staff who in turn help the mobility of residents.
- When residents on the first floor reach serious difficulty with mobility issues, they have had to leave the home in the past. This has been a point of sadness for residents. Chataway is conscious that the home should provide an opportunity for the care home to be a 'forever home' for residents once they are well established there.
- The lift is strategically located near to the front door. This provides ease of access in emergency but will support the independence of residents. For example, when welcoming visitors.

5.3 A Design & Access Statement has been prepared and submitted to accompany this planning application. This document provides a further detailed analysis of the site and its surroundings, the proposed development, and the background to this application. This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the Design & Access Statement.

5.4 The proposed extension will be finished in brick to match the existing and roof tiles to match the existing. The lift is formed of a lightweight steel frame with glazed and aluminum panels. It is proposed that the lift will feature a gable roof with a pitch to match the proportions of the existing principal gable to the front of the property. The windows will be finished timber effect brown UPVC to match the existing windows on the building.

6.0 Planning Policy & Material Considerations:

6.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 require that planning applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Local Development Plan for the purposes of this planning application comprises of the:

- Blaby District Local Plan (Core Strategy) Development Plan Document (February 2023)
- Blaby District Local Plan (Delivery) Development Plan Document (February 2019)

Core Strategy:

- 6.2 **Policy CS1 Strategy for Locating New Development** – Most new development in the District of Blaby, including housing, will take place within and adjoining the Principal Urban Area (PUA of Leicester).
- 6.3 **Policy CS2 Design of New Development** – All new development should respect distinctive local character and should contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality, contributing to a better quality of life for the local community.
- 6.4 **Policy CS5 Housing Distribution** – Sets out the minimum housing requirement figure for each settlement in the hierarchy for the plan period. Blaby is allocated for 420 homes.
- 6.5 **Policy CS6 Employment** - Seeks to ensure a range of employment opportunities to meet the needs of residents and wider communities. The policy supports the growth of existing businesses.
- 6.6 **Policy CS8 Mix of Housing** - The council will work with partners to meet any identified needs of specific groups including the provision of extra care accommodation to meet identified needs of older persons.
- 6.7 **Policy CS10 Transport Infrastructure** – In order to limit the impacts of new development, the need to travel by private car will be reduced by locating development so that people can access services and facilities without reliance on private motor vehicles.
- 6.8 **Policy CS24 Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development** – When considering proposals, the Council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Delivery Document:

- 6.9 **Policy DM1 Development within Settlement Boundaries** - Within the Settlement Boundaries, as set out on the Policies Map, development proposals consistent with other policies of the Local Plan will be supported.
- 6.10 **Policy DM8 Local Parking and Highway Design Standards** - Housing development, including householder development that affects parking or garage space, will be required to provide an appropriate level of parking provision that:
- a) Complies with the most up-to-date Leicestershire Local Highway Guidance; and
 - b) Is justified by an assessment of the site's accessibility, the type and mix of housing and the availability of and opportunities for public transport.

Other Material Considerations:

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017 - 2022:

- 6.11 “Leicestershire is projected to grow by 14.7 percent by 2037 from 2012. The over 65 population is predicted to grow by 72.7% while the 85 and over population is predicted to grow by 186.8%” (Page 5).
- 6.12 “The population growth patterns in Leicestershire have implications for the provision of services for older people. There will be more older people with complex needs who will require input from all parts of the health and social care system... ..It is also recognised locally, that supporting people to live independently through appropriate housing provision is a key enabler for the future sustainability of health and social care” (Page 6)

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2018 – 2021) Demography Report:

- 6.13 “Compared with England, the population of Leicestershire is older, with higher proportions of the population aged 40-64 (32.9% in the county compared with 31.7% in England) and 65 and over (20.6% compared with 18.5% for England)” (Page 4).
- 6.14 “The greatest cumulative change by broad age is projected to occur in the 65+ age band, accounting for an additional 71,888 older people in the country by 2043” (Page 5).
- 6.15 “The population growth patterns in Leicestershire have implications for the provision of services for older people. There will be more older people with complex needs who will require input from all parts of the health and social care system... ..It is also recognised locally, that supporting people to live independently through appropriate housing provision is a key enabler for the future sustainability of health and social care” (Page 6)

Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2018 – 2021) Housing Report:

- 6.16 “There are currently 149 registered Care Homes in Leicestershire, providing 5,030 beds. Of these, 30 also provide nursing, constituting 600 beds. The majority of care homes have contracts with Leicestershire County Council” (Page 31)

Accommodation Strategy for Older People 2016 – 2026:

- 6.17 “Older people want the same as everyone else from their accommodation i.e. shelter affordability, somewhere they feel safe and autonomous, have privacy, are able to relax and be with family and friends. In general, they may want to feel part of a community and have accommodation that can give them a sense of financial security, pride and status” (Page 5)
- 6.18 Older people’s accommodation is a complex picture because there is no fixed definition of what constitutes “old age”, some older people’s housing schemes have an entry criteria of 55 years of age but may have people living in them over the age of 100 years. People’s choice of accommodation varies significantly and can be determined by personal circumstances or attachment to a property or community, rather than practical decisions...
- 6.19 Nationally residential care living is reported to account for approximately 4% of over 65-year-olds. Based on the figure of there being 134,000 people over 65 years in Leicestershire and there currently being 134,000

7.0 Principle of Development:

- 7.1 Policy CS1 of the Local Plan sets the strategy for the local of development in the Borough. It explains that outside of the Principal Urban Area development will be focused within and adjoining Blaby and within adjoining settlements. Whetstone is one of those adjoining settlements.
- 7.2 Whetstone is identified as a Larger Central Settlement with a good range of services and facilities, and access to a range of transport modes. It also has a good functional relationship with higher order settlements as explained in the Core Strategy.
- 7.3 The application site is within Whetstone, within a highly sustainable location. It has good access to public transport. While the site itself relates to an existing and well-established care home operation. The proposed development would enhance the existing housing and health care offer.
- 7.4 Policy CS5 of the Local Plan sets requirements for the delivery of homes in the borough. For Whetstone it sets a requirement of 365 homes between 2006 – 2009. Section 5 of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

“it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed” *Paragraph 60*

“Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities” *Paragraph 62*

- 7.5 Policy CS8 states the council will work with partners to meet the needs of specific groups. This includes the provision of extra care accommodation to meet identified need. The **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2017 – 2022** clearly demonstrates a significant increase in the over 65 population which Chataway Care Home serves. The **Accommodation Strategy for Older People 2016 – 2026** explains that Older People’s choice of accommodation varies significantly and can be determined by personal circumstances or attachment to a property or community. Older people want somewhere they feel safe and autonomous while also part of the community.
- 7.6 Chataway Care Home has clear need for new bedrooms as demonstrated by the waiting list. This is set amongst the regional demographic contexts. The proposals provide an appropriate increase in bedspace while reconfiguring existing space to enable residents to be able to live there for longer. For example, the provision of a lift and the larger day space as discussed in section 5 of this statement.
- 7.7 The majority of Chataway residents are from the Wheatstone Parish. While those on the waiting list are also from the Wheatstone Parish. The proposed development will allow the home to better serve the community and provide an even higher standard of care. **The care home would not be undertaking a substantial investment for more bed spaces and enhancements if there was not a need.**
- 7.8 For the reasons set out above, the development would assist with meeting the local housing need of older people. This is set amongst the wider regional and national context for this type of housing. Therefore, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.

8.0 Highways:

8.1 Policy CS10 of the Local Development Plan aims to limit the impact of development on vehicle movements. It seeks to reduce reliance on private motor vehicles. Policy DM8 considers that development will be required to provide an appropriate level. While it should be appreciated that Section 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework states:

“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe” *Paragraph 111*

8.2 **It is noted that:**

- The existing arrangement provides 6 car parking spaces.
- The existing arrangement provides 14 bedrooms.
- The proposed arrangement provides 6 car parking space.
- The proposed arrangement provides 16 bedrooms.

8.3 Highway Requirements for Development of the LHDG requires one space per three bedrooms. In this case, it should be appreciated that the proposed development:

- Does not result in an increase of staffing.
- Does not result in a change to servicing or deliveries.
- Only for two bedrooms (not three).
- No residents at the care home drive.
- No complaint has ever been received from surrounding neighbours.
- An appointment system is in place.
- The site is in a highly sustainable location with staff making active use of public transport in a ‘Larger Central Village’

8.4 **Criteria B of Policy DM8** states development will be required to provide an appropriate level of parking provision that:

b) Is justified by an assessment of the site’s accessibility, the type and mix of housing and the availability of and opportunities for public transport.

8.5 In this specific case, when acknowledging the nature and scale of the proposed development weighted against existing arrangements, viewed in light of the significant benefits of the proposals and the specific type of housing and residents; it is clear the provision of 6 car parking spaces is well justified and appropriate to the use and its limited intensity.

8.6 For the reasons set out above, the proposed development would not cause an unacceptable impact on highway safety, nor would it result in severe residual cumulative impacts on the road network. Therefore, the proposed development is acceptable from a highways and parking perspective.

9.0 Design:

- 9.1 Policy CS2 of the Local Development Plan expects that all new development should respect the distinctive local character and should contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality, contributing to a better quality of life for the local community. The new proposed layout has been designed to ensure the operational needs of the residential care home.
- 9.2 However, the proposal has also been designed to respect the predominately residential area and domestic aesthetic of properties. The proposal makes use of matching materials which complement the existing building. Therefore, the proposed development will reflect and respond to the existing characteristics of the property and the surrounding area.



- 9.3 In accordance with Policy CS2 Design of New Development, the design rationale is based upon contributing to a better quality of life for the local community. All aspects of the proposals have a clear operational or needs based justification which is underpinned by either improving quality life, quality of living environment, or provision of safety and support. The design also provides flexibility to the operator to respond to differing circumstances and needs of residents over time. The proposal are a result of a lengthy design process and discussion of operational needs and past experiences.
- 9.4 The design of the proposal has carefully considered the scale and massing of extension as well as their positioning. This has been balanced with operational needs and requirements. The proposed design will enhance the building improving the standard of accessibility for people with disabilities. This is a major planning benefit of the proposal and key consideration in the determination of this application. In accordance, with Section 11 of the National Framework the proposal ensures safe and healthy living conditions. While the proposals comply with the guiding principles of Paragraph 130 of the National Planning Policy Framework; the proposed development is visually attractive as a result good architectural practice. It is also sympathetic to local character and the surrounding built environment.
- 9.5 The proposal does not imbalance the existing aesthetics. The main section with front facing gable with remain prominent with the tallest ridge on street scene. The proposed extension continues the existing dropped ridge, ensuring and retaining the existing subservience of this section of the building. The proposal by no means dominates or overwhelms the existing building. Rather the proposal strategically positions and take opportunities to extend.
- 9.6 For the reasons set out above, the proposed development respects the distinctive local character and would contribute to creating places of a high architectural and urban design quality. All the while contributing to a better quality of life for the local community.

10 Conclusion:

- 10.1 The application site is positioned off East Avenue in Whetstone and is occupied by Chataway Care Home. This is an existing residential care home providing personal care for up to 14 people aged 65 and over. Chataway Care Home provides the best possible care and living environment for residents.
- 10.2 The home continuously operates at maximum capacity and currently has a waiting list. The home only benefits from a stair lift which is restrictive for residents with serious mobility issues. Currently the existing internal arrangement does not provide one main communal open space large enough for group activities.
- 10.3 The proposed development is for first floor rear extensions, ground and first floor side extension, and a front extension and alterations to the roofscape. These extensions facilitate alterations to the general arrangement of the care home and will provide 2 new bedrooms as well as a new platform lift.
- 10.4 The development would assist with meeting the local housing need of older people. This is set amongst the wider regional and national context for this type of housing. Therefore, the principle of the proposed development is acceptable.
- 10.5 In this specific case, when acknowledging the nature and scale of the proposed development weighted against existing arrangements, viewed in light of the moderate benefits of the proposals and the specific type of housing and residents; it is clear the provision of 6 car parking spaces is well justified and appropriate to the use and its limited intensity.
- 10.6 The proposal has also been designed to respect the predominately residential area and domestic aesthetic of properties. The proposal makes use of matching materials which complement the existing the building. The proposal also takes the opportunity to simplify the roofscape of the existing building.
- 10.7 All aspects of the proposals have a clear operational or needs based justification which is underpinned by either improving quality life, quality of living environment, or provision of safety and support. The design also provides flexibility to operator to respond to differing circumstances and needs of residents over time. The proposal are a result of a lengthy design process and discussion of operational needs and past experiences.

The Chataway Care home would not be undertaking a substantial investment for more bed spaces and enhancements if there was not a clear operational need and justification. The Chataway Care Home is committed to providing the best possible care and living environment for residents.

The proposed development complies with both National and Local Planning Policies. Therefore, in accordance with paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework, it is requested that the proposed development is approved without delay.

Given the operational need for the proposal and the existing sensitive community use at the application site. The applicant kindly requests that the Local Planning Authority approaches the proposal in a positive way and works proactively to secure the development in accordance with paragraph 38 of the National Planning Policy Framework.