Application for Outline Planning Permission

Care Home Development for up to 75 Resident Accommodations and 30 Supported Living Accommodation and Warden Accommodation (Use Class C2) at Darwin Drive, Ollerton, with Access from Darwin Drive. All other Matters Reserved.

Darwin Drive, Ollerton

PLANNING STATEMENT











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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement accompanies and supports the application for OUTLINE planning permission hereby made to Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) for the development of a care village, comprising a single building older persons' care home (Use Class C2) with capacity to up to 75 resident ensuite bedroom units, with assisted living accommodation provided for up to 30 residents in a cluster of five, 6-bedroom dwelling units 9. The applicant is Millhouse Care Group.
- 1.2 The statement addresses planning issues that are presented by this proposal and demonstrates how it responds to changing demographic trends and complies with national and local planning policy. It is focused upon issues of principle pertinent to the outline application, with detail limited to access and ecology considerations. In the absence of other material considerations indicating otherwise it demonstrates that approval of the application is justified.
- 1.3 An outline application process has been employed such that the principle of the use of the site can be established. All matters apart from access are reserved. This approach is part justified by the currently fluid context of specific care home regulation and standards which a future operator would need to comply with at the time off development. Such regulatory context and operator requirement would then shape the specific detail, layout and scale of operation at Darwin Drive.
- 1.4 In that context an illustrative layout is offered to demonstrate the capacity of the application site to comfortably accommodate the scale of development proposed.

2. Location

- 2.1 The application site lies well within the urban framework of Ollerton as defined by the development plan, to the south of the town centre on the mixed-use regeneration site formerly known as Sherwood Energy Village. Previous to that the site was occupied by Ollerton Colliery. It comprises an area (0.45 ha) of car parking and rudimentary landscaping as part of the original site remediation and subdivision into developable parcels. Figure 1 sets out the location and context of the site.
- 2.2 The site is accessed from Darwin Drive and Burbank Avenue service roads laid out as part of the Sherwood Energy Village regeneration scheme.

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Figure 1: Extent and context of the application site

- 3. Site Characteristics and Sustainability Credentials
- 3.1 The application site of 0.45ha falls within a wider area characterised by recent mixed-use developments over a large regeneration site with existing service roads and landscaping. Land use is a mix of employment and housing sites and several remaining undeveloped plots. Developed plots house a range of Class E and B2 office, warehousing and light industrial uses with other sites occupied by housing (C3) and residential homes (C2) within the distinctive concentric circle street pattern of the former Energy Village. Generally, the terrain is flat, with orbital service roads providing good access around the wider area. These roads are linked by the main access route at Edison Rise which has a roundabout junction to the north-west with the main A6075 and Forest Road in Ollerton town centre. The former private road system is



- adopted by Nottinghamshire County Council and offers a high standard of access to the site.
- 3.2 The wider area sits across level land, with very limited variation in terrain in the immediate vicinity. The most prominent features of the area are the buildings themselves erected across the former colliery site. These vary in character and scale with generally modern or utilitarian appearance reflecting the range of employment uses, both office-focused, light industrial and commercial uses. Architectural character is typical of early 21st century business parks with flat or low pitch roofs and mixed contemporary external materials with open car parking to each unit. Buildings are set within partly landscaped plots with a limited and immature treescape. To the south, beyond the railway line, land rises slightly over former colliery spoil heaps with some more established areas of woodland.
- 3.3 The application site stands in the western half of the distinctive concentric ring layout of the business park. To the immediate north of the site is the contemporary design 3 and 4 storey 'E-Centre' building of serviced offices and car parking. To the east, across Darwin Drive are medium sized, 3-storey business units and service yards/parking. West of the application site, separated by pedestrian access path and landscape green space are similar scaled buildings containing multiple business units with large parking provision, but which are accessed by Latimer Way, the outer concentric service road. To the south of the application site across Burbank Avenue is a civil engineering enterprise comprising yard and storage set beyond offices (relative to the application site). Approximately 60m to the south-east of the application site, across Darwin Drive are a number of mixed character residential developments of 3-story flats and more conventional housing arranged in small terraces at Crawford Court, Newcomen Close and Stephenson Close. South-east of these is a Fountains Park retirement village development of mixed bungalows and 3 storey accommodations fronting both Darwin Drive and Newton Hill service road.
- 3.4 The wider built character of the vicinity is of mid-rise, mixed uses with an increase in site density arising from the residential developments noted above towards the inner service roads. Landscaping across the wider area is of modest quality with limited treescape but with a network of pathways, drainage soughs and a community park and playground within the inner circle of the concentric street layout.
- 3.5 The wider business park site is accessed from the north-east with no through access or traffic, and consequently a relatively quiet character pervades.
- 3.6 The application site falls within the urban framework of Ollerton as defined by the NSDC Local Plan. A large supermarket stands to the immediate north of



the site and town centre services and facilities are located around 400m to the north. A medical centre and doctors surgery stands 750m walking distance of the application site.



Figure 2. The application site from Darwin Drive

- 3.7 The application site itself is a level piece of ground with limited boundary treatments and some scattered self-set scrub and saplings. The site has been used as car parking with compacted gravel surfaced hard standings and street light infrastructure. Vehicular access to the application site is via Burbank Avenue service road at the southern edge to the site, with immediate access from the avenue to Darwin Drive.
- 3.8 During construction of Sherwood Energy Village the former colliery site was stripped of all surface materials, remediation of contamination risk undertaken and the site re-graded with imported surface materials. Consequently, all surface vegetation and the self-set treescape is of relatively low or immature landscape character value.
- 3.9 The 0.45ha irregular shaped site part comprises a hardstanding and otherwise contains landscaped open space providing habitats of modified and neutral grassland, dry ditch and scattered immature trees. A Habitat and Protected Species Report has been undertaken by Paul Hicking Associates to accompany this application. The development of the site also has potential to impact on



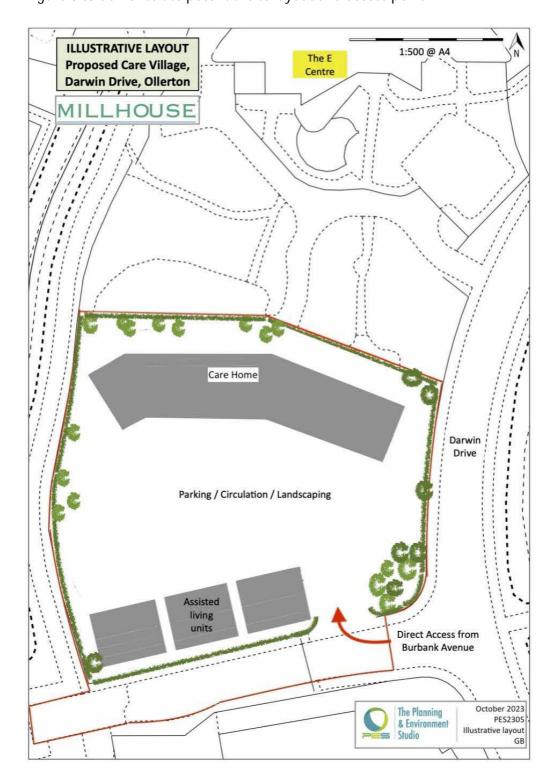
the identified European Sites of Birklands and Bilhaugh and Birklands West and Ollerton Corner SSSI and the Sherwood Forest Special Protection Area (ppSPA). A HRA Shadow Screening Assessment has therefore been prepared and accompanies the application. The twin reports set out that risk to the integrity of the interest features of the European protected sites are low. The habitat and protected species survey confirms the site is not protected for biodiversity value but indicates some potential on the site for nesting birds and amphibians and as such precautionary measures should be secured in relation to construction period works.

- 3.10 The site falls within Flood Risk Zone 1 an area of low flooding potential (source: Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning).
- 3.11 There are no heritage designations associated with the site.
- 4. Pertinent Planning History
- 4.1 The original approval for redevelopment of the colliery site to Sherwood Energy Village in 2003 cites a mix of uses comprising industry, commerce, housing, recreation, education, and associated works.
- 4.2 The office development known as the E-Centre was an original component of the wider site regeneration. Application 12/00441/FUL Change of use the existing building to include a health club (Use Class D2) and Beauty Salon (Sui Generis) in addition to the existing office (Use Class B1) and Restaurant (Use Class A3) (Part Retrospective) was granted in June 2012 and is the existing lawful use of the site.
- 4.3 The application site falls across the southern part of the E-Centre plot, now in separate ownership.
- 4.4 Planning permissions for residential development have been granted to the south-east of the application site. Firstly, under 09/01015/FULM erection of 12 single-storey and three-storey buildings containing 54 self-contained residential units and associated facilities to form retirement community for residents aged over 55 years was permitted and subsequently implemented. Permission 16/00902/FULM granted approval for construction of 24 two-bedroom apartments and 27 three-bedroom houses, subsequently implemented.
- 5. The Proposal
- 5.1 Outline planning permission sought from Newark and Sherwood District Council (NSDC) for the development of a 'care village' off Burbank Avenue,

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Ollerton. This application is made in outline with all matters reserved apart from access to the site from Burbank Avenue. The following paragraphs set out the proposed scale and function of the scheme, but are indicative in all other respects apart from the scale of development of up to 75 en-suite care rooms and up to 30 assisted living units. An illustrative layout is offered at Figure 3 to demonstrate potential site layout and access point.



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Figure 3: Illustrative Site Layout

- 5.2 The Care Village would be expected to comprise a principal building as an older persons' care home with up to 75 en-suite bedrooms, with assisted living accommodation provided for up to 30 residents within an annex or separate building or buildings. The care home component would be constructed over 2 and 3 storeys and vehicular access taken from Burbank Avenue. Figure 4 indicates an indicative external appearance of the care home from Burbank Avenue, developed in association with A&N architects of West London. This does not represent a final scheme in terms of layout or massing but provides a benchmark to be used as a starting point to demonstrate the capacity and suitability of the site for the use proposed at the scale needed to deliver a viable proposal. The facility would be set within landscaped grounds within which amenity and habitat provision would be made.
- 5.3 Staff and visitor parking of 15 spaces would be anticipated as being adequate having regard to residents not being motor vehicle drivers. The care home would be a self-contained facility with residential rooms, communal spaces and all staff and care facilities to provide a contemporary, modern and safe care environment at a scale to deliver a viable enterprise.



Figure 4: Indicative concept.

- Assisted living units would be self-contained but afforded with on-site warden monitoring, with each anticipated to be in the region of 50-65m² floorspace. Vehicular access arrangements are to be secured from the established access at Burbank Avenue subject to any necessary improvements. Pedestrian access would also be available to Darwin Drive from the proposed development.
- 5.5 Residential permissions elsewhere on the former Sherwood Energy Village development (as noted above) has established the general principle of residential development on the site. Access via Burbank Avenue is established and to a good standard. As such the principle for the development of the land as an older persons' care village at the scale proposed is the focus of the application. The term Care Village is used as a



descriptive term to acknowledge the functional and management links between the main care home development and the assisted living units which will be warden supported. Moreover, the graded levels of assistance and care offered within the proposed scheme allows a path for individuals through from those only requiring lower levels of assistance to when more continuous care is needed, without having to relocate outside the site and the resident community.

- 5.6 It is critical to acknowledge the need for the care providers to propose and define the final scale and detailed arrangement of the scheme (up to the proposed number of rooms established by any outline consent), should the principle be accepted. This fact therefore demands that the scheme be tested in outline first with an indicative scheme offered such that the general scale and the principle of the use can be properly assessed. As noted at paragraph 1.3, wider market conditions, public funding for care provision and regulatory contexts are currently fluid, and consequently the specific detail for the scheme would be determined within a detailed reserved matters application.
- 5.7 A site area of slightly under 0.5 ha, set within the wider regenerated mixeduse development clearly suggests the site, with buildings to up to 3 storeys can accommodate the scale of development proposed. It is important to note that the capacity of the development as proposed is necessary to ensure the development would deliver a viable scheme over the longer term, and consequently serve to meet clear and increasing care home capacity which at the same time affords further release further down the housing ladder locally.
- 6. Planning Policy and Housing Supply Context NPPF
- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (September 2023) sets out up-to-date government planning priorities is an important material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 6.2 NPPF maintains a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development a principle which fully embraces meeting community and social needs (paragraphs 8 and 11). LPAs should approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 6.3 Paragraph 38 of the NPPF supports a positive approach to dealing with planning applications. It states that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way and to work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social, and environmental conditions of the area. It states



- decisively that decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 6.4 Paragraph 60 seeks to that to significantly boost the supply of homes, 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 and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. NPPF paragraph 61 clarifies that government policy for housing requires LPAs to have regards to the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, etc.
- 6.5 The NPPF glossary defines Older People as People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly- retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialized housing for those with support or care needs.
- 6.6 Part 11 of the NPPF notes at 120 (c) that decision making should give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.
- 6.7 Paragraph 180 states that opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.
- The Newark and Sherwood Local Plan and Housing Supply Context

 The pertinent elements of the adopted development plan for the site comprises the Newark and Sherwood Adopted Core Strategy 2019 and is the formal starting point in law for the determination of planning applications. Pertinent to this application are the following objectives and planning policies of the 2019 Adopted Core Strategy.
- 6.9 Strategic objective ShA O1 seeks to encourage the regeneration and redevelopment of the former mining communities of the area by fully exploiting the opportunities presented by Sherwood Forest Regional Park, the Sherwood Growth Zone and the skills and knowledge of the residents of the area. ShA O2 seeks to strengthen the role of Ollerton Town Centre as a retail and employment centre for both Ollerton & Boughton and the wider Sherwood Area. The plan designates Ollerton and Boughton as a Service Centre in the settlement hierarchy.



- 6.10 Building on these strategic objectives Spatial Policy 2 states that within Service Centres and Principal Villages identified for regeneration, the District Council will seek to secure new employment opportunities, the regeneration of vacant land and the provision of new housing. Policy seeks to secure and support the role of Service Centres and Principal Villages where provision will be made for new housing to meet local housing need and support for employment to provide local jobs.
- 6.11 Core Policy 3 Housing Mix, Type and Density states that the District Council will expect good quality housing design in line with the provisions of Core Policy 9 Sustainable Design. Development densities in all housing developments should normally be no lower than an average 30 dwellings per hectare net. Development densities below this will need to be justified.
- 6.12 Significantly, Core Policy 3 notes that the Council will seek to secure new housing development which adequately addresses the housing need of the District, namely:
 - Family housing of 3 bedrooms or more
 - Smaller houses of 2 bedrooms or less.
 - Housing for the elderly and disabled population.

Particular emphasis will be placed on securing smaller houses of 2 bedrooms or less and those for housing for elderly and disabled population.

- 6.13 Paragraph 6.90 of the Core Strategy notes that Ollerton & Boughton acts as a service centre to a large local population, both in the town and the surrounding Sherwood Area. It expects that over the plan period it is anticipated that the town will see the provision of new housing, employment and associated facilities that will help regenerate the area and reinforce Ollerton's role as the main centre within the Sherwood Area.
- 6.14 Paragraph 6.91 notes that the main focus for services is Ollerton Town Centre. It includes Sherwood Energy Village as part of the town centre. It states that development of the Sherwood Energy Village has encouraged new businesses into the town. Vacancy levels within the Town Centre have been recorded as being high. The District Council will therefore promote positive action, through the re-use of vacant and underused shops and other buildings within the town centre, and seek to secure the redevelopment of vacant sites for appropriate main town centre uses.
- 6.15 The plan notes that the role of Ollerton and Boughton is as a sustainable settlement serving a wider rural area. This will be supported by (amongst others), promoting new housing and employment opportunities within the town.



- 6.16 The Newark and Sherwood Allocations and Development Management DPD was adopted in 2013. It therefore pre-dates the Adopted Core Strategy significantly. The application site is not allocated for any specific land use, nor safeguarded. The policies map clarifies that the site falls within the Urban Boundary and therefore that policy DM1 applies.
- 6.17 DM1 states that Within the Urban Boundaries of the Sub-Regional Centre and Service Centres and the Village Envelopes of the Principal Villages, as defined on the Policies Map, proposals will be supported for housing, employment, community, retail, cultural, leisure and tourism development appropriate to the size and location of the settlement, its status in the settlement hierarchy and in accordance with the Core Strategy and other relevant Development Plan Documents.
- 6.18 In relation to the national and local policy context for the site, it is pertinent to have regard to current housing supply. The most recent Newark and Sherwood 5-Year Housing Land Supply Monitoring Report (April, 2022) identifies a 7.05 years supply of deliverable housing site. This meets the 5-year requirement set out by NPPF, and as such suggests the tilted balance would not be expected come into play where housing provision is proposed. However, given the character of the site and location within the urban framework of Ollerton, exceptions to applying location strategy or environmental constraint policies are not expected to be necessary for the proposals to be approved.
- 6.19 From the above paragraphs it can be seen there is a strong and permissive policy context to proposals for the delivery of specialist need housing on a vacant regeneration site within the urban framework of a service centre. More specific policy application in relation to design and amenity will be appropriately applied at any reserved matters scheme stage following agreement of the principle of the care village proposals under this outline application.
- 7. Planning Assessment & Policy Compliance
- 7.1 The preceding section sets out the policy context for the proposals. As set out below, the development proposals can be seen to afford multiple benefits over the existing use and unremarkable character of the site, and together would comply with planning policy, deliver positive local benefits and in particular improve the housing offer to those with specific needs for care or assistance in later life. Such provision is clearly supported by the relatively recent Core Strategy and the NPPF in relation to housing delivery.



- Principle and Need for Housing for Older People
- 7.2 The preceding section of this report sets out that in local policy terms (notwithstanding the age of the adopted development plan) that housing development on the application side is acceptable in principle. The current application is for managed or assisted residential use by older people (use class C2), and as such supports NPPF's objectives for housing delivery to meet the needs of different sections of the community specifically referencing older people.
- 7.3 The proposed targeted residential development will contribute to meeting NSDC's specific community needs and would further national and local planning policy priorities expectations in respect to providing a mix of size and types of housing as set out in the previous section of this report. Strategic policy for Sherwood (and by implication Ollerton) explicitly identifies need for housing delivery to serve older people.
- As a wider context to this proposal, and to the national and local need to respond to an ageing population profile, an 8% increase in individuals aged 65+ years has occurred between 2015/16 and 2021/22 in England. It is estimated that by 2050, around one in four people will be aged 65 and over. Demand for social care services has already risen from 2015/16 to 2021/22, and demand is forecast to continue to rise to support a population that is both ageing and increasingly susceptible to multiple long-term conditions. Significant elderly residential and nursing capacity will be required to meet increasingly complex care needs.¹
- 7.5 The NSDC Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2020) (Arc⁴) sets out at section 4 that the area's ageing population is likely to intensify demand for certain types of general needs properties, in certain locations and of certain sizes or physical forms and designs. Table 4.1 of the report shows how the number of people in older age groups is expected to increase over the period 2019 to 2033 with the number of people aged 85 and over expected to increase by 66.1% in NSDC. The number of households headed by someone aged 60 and over is expected to increase by 28.4% between 2019 and 2033. There is a particular concentration of such in the Sherwood area.
- 7.6 The report states the need for specialist older person accommodation is expected to increase. Table 4.3 considers the ratio of older people to current provision and then applies this ratio to future household projections. Based on population projections to the year 2033, there is an additional need for 1,344 units of specialist older persons' accommodation specifically in Newark and Sherwood. The HNA does not specify the precise nature of specialist older person dwellings to be built. This is to allow flexibility in delivery and Planning

¹ Report into Residential Care Home Demand Trends 2023. The Nuffield Trust 04.23.



Practice Guidance states that 'any single development may contain a range of different types of specialist housing'.

- 7.7 Despite the clear demographic implications of an ageing population, the pandemic and its after-effects has had a particularly pronounced and harmful impact on the viability of the existing care home sector. In combination with significant costs increases and staff shortages, less-efficient, older and smaller care home operations have found it impossible to remain viable, at the same time as local authority and adult social care funding is extremely stressed. The ageing population profile of the country remains an undeniable and onerous fact, and even having regard to some increases in home-based care provision, there is a recognised divergence between future need and provision of fit-for-purpose residential care or assisted living housing for the elderly.
- 7.8 The provision of up to 75 care home beds and 30 assisted living units for the elderly at the site, within a purpose built, modern, safe and efficient facility would therefore respond to such need, and serve to further the objectives for mixed housing provision meeting the needs of specific groups demanded by NPPF.
- 7.9 The proposals would therefore clearly make a meaningful contribution towards meeting specialist housing delivery as needed. It is to be noted that with the uptake of care homes and assisted living capacity for the elderly, wider housing market benefits can accrue from the freeing of family-sized housing vacated by future residents of the proposals. In doing so, a wider contribution to meeting the housing needs of the community can be realized through approval of the application.

Site-Specific Considerations

- 7.10 The application is made in outline with all matters reserved apart from access. Only the principle of the development/use at the scale proposed (i.e. up to 75 care home rooms and 30 assisted living rooms) and access arrangements are material to the determination of this application. It is important to acknowledge that specific design, layout and final quantum of units provided are determined at reserved matters stage, and that those must remain flexible at this stage. This simply reflects the need for a reserved matters scheme to respond to the requirements and conditions of the currently fluid care sector regulatory context and market conditions, at that time.
- 7.11 Access will be via the existing site access on Burbank Avenue (Figure 5). The vehicular access point itself will be improved as necessary depending on the final layout proposed. Such layout and location of car parking to service staff and visitors is reserved, but it is expected that 15 off street spaces will be provided. Capacity on the site and service road context would potentially allow for a separate entry and exit point along Burbank Avenue, to assist with



flow through the facility and reduce the possibility of on-street waiting to arise to access the site.



Figure 5: Existing service road at Burbank Avenue (looking east to Darwin Drive)

- 7.12 Biodiversity considerations are addressed within the accompanying PEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (Paul Hicking Associates) which support the application and are proportionate to an outline proposal. This clarifies that ecological impacts of the proposals would not present reason for a restriction to the development proposals beyond appropriate site-specific mitigation measures and during construction and the requirement to deliver appropriate biodiversity net gain across the site at reserved matters stage. The HRA assessment demonstrates that the scale, location and most importantly the use of the site (i.e. residents with restricted mobility) would not present a risk to the integrity of the identified European Sites of Birklands and Bilhaugh and Birklands West and Ollerton Corner SSSI and the Sherwood Forest Special Protection Area (ppSPA). The assessments' findings should afford sufficient confidence that the principle of the development could be accommodated without the risk that any prohibitive ecological considerations would later arise.
- 7.13 Residential amenity implications on neighbouring properties would be a matter reserved for subsequent approval once design options are finalised. It is evident from the neighbouring uses that residential amenity considerations arising from the establishment of C2 use would be highly unlikely to be prohibitive. The C2 use class care home and assisted living units would be inherently 'good neighbour' development within the context of business uses



and the slightly more distanced residential properties around the site and across the wider vicinity. The age and mobility profile of residents within the care village would be such that vehicular trip generation would be extremely low, and outdoor recreation will be characterised by quiet enjoyment of the site grounds and integrated green spaces of the final scheme. It is material to the consideration of the application that the residential developments to the south-east and east serviced by Darwin Drive share the same mixed-use context as the application site, and were accepted as appropriate uses by the council within the former Sherwood Energy Village site.

- 7.14 Whilst a matter for reserved matters consideration, following the evolution of a final design scheme, risk of contamination or subsidence would normally be a material consideration in the area. However, in the case of Sherwood Energy Village's development and site preparation, such matters have been mitigated in advance, with these considerations not being material in the approval of neighbouring development proposals.
- 7.15 The application site is not affected by landscape or heritage designations. The site remains an under-utilised open space within the built framework of the town, and as such remains a highly sustainable location for the location of clearly needed specialized residential development.

8. Summary

- 8.1 The proposals can be seen to comply with relevant national and local adopted policy. The up-to-date Core Strategy specifically supports the provision of new residential capacity for older people, and for the regeneration of under-used sites. In planning policy terms, the context for the proposals is highly supportive.
- 8.3 The council as LPA has accepted the principle of housing elsewhere on the former Sherwood Energy Village site which have the same immediate context as the application site. With details of design, layout, parking, landscaping and biodiversity mitigation and net gain reserved, there is a strong case for the approval of the outline proposals in principle. It would remain wholly within the gift of the LPA to ensure that any finally agreed proposals would fully meet the expectations of national and local planning policy in respect of those matter reserved, and their implications for local amenity and character. Planning conditions to an outline permission are invited in relation the provision of appropriate and necessary site-specific detail and control.
- 8.4 The proposals would serve to deliver a materially positive contribution towards specific need housing and care within Newark and Sherwood. Evidence that there is local demand for such housing types is compelling.



8.5 The proposals are considered to be sustainable, needed and deliverable. In the absence of other material considerations the application should be permitted. Should the LPA require any further detail or clarification, or discuss matters further, an open dialogue with the agent is fully supported.

Graham Bradford MRTPI Director, PES Ltd

On behalf of



