

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 Pot House Lane, Stocksbridge, with Access from Linden Crescent. All other Matters Reserved.

Pot House Lane, Stocksbridge

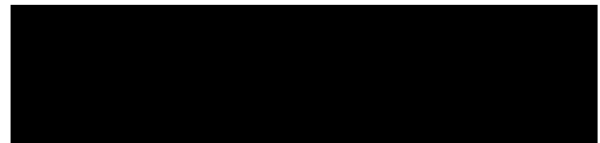
PLANNING STATEMENT



November 2023

MILLHOUSE





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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement accompanies and supports the application for OUTLINE planning permission hereby made to Sheffield City Council (SCC) 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 en-suite bedroom units, with assisted living accommodation provided for up to 30 residents in a cluster of five, 6-bedroom dwelling units. 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 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 should be forthcoming.
- 1.3 The application site has recent planning history of permission for residential development, but viability considerations have resulted in no development being undertaken. This application sets out that there is strong need/demand for contemporary standard care home development, and as such approval of the principle for this form of development would trigger reserved matters proposal and implementation in the shortest time feasible.
- 1.4 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 any future operator would need to comply with at the time of development. Such regulatory context and operator requirement would then shape the specific detail, layout and scale of operation at Linden Crescent.

2. Location

- 2.1 The application site lies well within the urban framework of Stocksbridge on the southern valley side of the Upper Don valley. It comprises of an area (0.64 ha) of mainly undeveloped land and a single dwelling and curtilage at No. 49 Linden Crescent (vacant). Figure 1 sets out the context of the site.
- 2.2 The application site falls within a predominantly residential area with housing established along its northern boundary to Pot House Lane, and along the eastern part of Linden Avenue to its southern boundary. To the west is an undeveloped boundary to Pot House Lane with the Alpine Care Home to the west of the lane. To the eastern site boundary are the courts and green of

Stocksbridge Tennis Club and Stocksbridge Friendship Bowling Club. The town centre is located approximately 400m to the north. The nearest bus stop is at Shay House Lane/Linden Crescent junction approximately 150m to the east of the site.



Figure 1: Extent and context of the application site

3. Site Characteristics

- 3.1 The application site comprises an area (0.64 Ha) of mainly undeveloped land and a single dwelling and curtilage at No. 49 Linden Avenue. A small number of small semi-derelict sheds and former building bases stand across the site, associated with its past use as a smallholding. That use has long since ceased and the site (with the exception of the dwelling) is best described as an unmanaged urban meadow.
- 3.2 The site occupies markedly sloping land, with a fall from the southern Linden Crescent boundaries down to Pot House Lane curtilages of between 3m and 5m, generally increasing to the east. There is little change in relief between east and west boundaries. A topographic survey of the site accompanies the application material.
- 3.3 The site is bounded by a variety of residential curtilage boundaries, predominantly stone walling, post and wire and hedges, with a greater

concentration of trees beyond the north-east boundary (outside the site). Within the site trees are generally absent with limited self-set individuals trees to the western fringes.

- 3.4 Dwellings which bound the application site are generally afforded with generous rear gardens with minimum depth between rear elevations and boundary to the application site of between 13m and 27m. Dwellings to Linden Crescent are two storeys with a north-facing rear aspect, with predominantly two storied dwellings to Pot House Lane, with occasional bungalows or split-level dwellings.
- 3.5 Within the south-western corner of the generally rectangular site is 49 Linden Crescent (Figure 2). This mid-20th century detached dwelling stands separated from other dwellings bounding the site on land which bounds Pot house Lane to the west. It is of no heritage value. The dwelling is not occupied.



Figure 2. 49 Linden Crescent

- 3.6 The site falls within Flood Risk Zone 1 – an area of low flooding potential (source: Environment Agency). There are no ecological or heritage designations associated with the site.

4. Pertinent Planning History

- 4.1 The site was granted outline planning approval for a residential development and a new road access from Linden Crescent (SCC planning reference number 17/01543/OUT) approved on 14 July 2017 subject to conditions.
- 4.2 A Reserved Matters application addressing appearance, landscaping, layout and scale (reference 19/04594/REM) was approved on 18.11.2020 for a development of 14 dwellings with associated parking, landscaping works and formation of access road.
- 4.3 That permission, at the time of making this application, remains extant, but as yet no material start has been made.

5. The Proposal

- 5.1 This application is made in outline with all matters reserved apart from access arrangements. OUTLINE planning permission sought from Sheffield City Council (SCC) for the development of a 'care village', comprising a principal building as older persons' care home with up to 75 en-suite bedrooms, communal spaces, kitchens, maintenance and staff areas, with assisted living accommodation provided for up to 30 residents in a cluster of five, six room blocks.
- 5.2 The main Care Home component 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.
- 5.2 The principle of the AL units is to provide an entry pathway to a longer-term care but also to afford the opportunity for a spouse or partner to co-habit with a person in need of residential care, without the need for separation, and or for family and friends to visit and stay overnight. Each assisted living unit would be semi-self-contained with single bedroom (twin beds), kitchenette (but not a full kitchen or dining space) and en-suite bathroom with small living space. Residents of the AL units afforded with all the services provided within the main care block including the provision of catering, maintenance, cleaning, monitoring and access to all communal and grounds amenities and activities therein. On-site 24/7 warden monitoring covers the AL units. Each AL unit is anticipated to be in the region of 50-65m² floorspace.
- 5.3 Controlled vehicular access arrangements are to be secured from Linden Crescent with the demolition of No. 49 necessary to accommodate appropriate junction standards. Gated/controlled pedestrian access would

also be available to Pot House Lane from the proposed Assisted Living units, which would also be provided with up to 0.5 parking spaces per unit, reflecting a potentially higher degree of personal autonomy to primary resident partners.

- 5.4 The extant permission on the site has accepted both the principle of development on this site and access arrangements to be secured from Linden Crescent with the demolition of No. 49. 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 provide for care home provision to couples without the need for separation. 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.
- 5.5 It is critical to acknowledge the need for care providers to propose and define the final scale and detailed arrangement of the scheme, 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 1.4, 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.
- 5.6 An indicative scheme, which allows the LPA to consider the local implications of a development at the scale proposed has been prepared by BTP Architects of Manchester on behalf of the applicant. 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 demonstrated the capacity and suitability of the site for the use proposed at the scale needed to deliver a viable proposal.



Figure 3: Indicative site layout.

- 5.7 The indicative layout for the site (Figure 3) utilises the access arrangements as currently approved under planning permission 19/04594/REM. Staff and visitor parking would be provided proportionate to the scale of the development, recognising that a great majority of the residents of the care home of assisted living units would not be drivers/car owners. The main care home would be centrally located on the site, with the assisted living units being located in the Pot House Lane environs to the west, with level pedestrian access to the street. In presenting the assisted care dwellings to the lane a coherent relationship in terms of street scene and scale of development would be achieved to the public realm. Visitor and staff parking would be provided to the southern areas of the site, with open greenspaces retained around the east and north perimeters of the site.
- 5.8 The indicative scheme responds to the sloping profile of the site and offers a split-level development of a single block of residential rooms, communal space and care facilities to the care home element. This would stand separate to - but functionally related to - five free standing dwellings providing assisted living apartments and on-site a warden accommodation. These would take the form of contemporary detached maisonette type buildings of two storeys with conventional external massing and form.

- 5.9 A 'gardens in the sky' concept is proposed in relation to the main care home building which could deliver a number of benefits (see Figure 4 Indicative illustration). Whilst flexible at this stage, the main care home building could be presented as a flat-roofed development which offers external and accessible communal amenity space for residents, as a series of safe and managed green spaces and rooftop garden terraces. This presents opportunities for biodiversity net gain to be integrated into the built spaces from the outset, for visual softening to the building and reducing its overall scale through flat roof massing. Such spaces would offer residents outdoor space with separation from traffic and other hazards, real or perceived, experienced by older people.



Figure 4: General design concept for integrated green spaces

6. Planning Policy and Housing Supply Context
- NPPF
- 6.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) significantly post-dates the adopted Sheffield Local Plan (2009). It is a particularly important material consideration in determining planning applications, particularly where the adopted Local Plan conflicts with or is not up to date with its provisions.
- 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.
- 6.6 Paragraph 180 notes that when determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles (as pertinent):
- a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;
- 6.9 Paragraph 180 goes on to state 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 Sheffield Local Plan and Housing Supply Context

- 6.10 The pertinent elements of the adopted development plan for the site comprises the Sheffield City Council Adopted Core Strategy 2009 and saved components of the Sheffield UDP, although the latter is significantly out-of-date. Consequently, this plan precedes NPPF and in most respects suggests full weight should be afforded to the provisions of NPPF. Nevertheless, it remains the formal starting point in law for the determination of planning applications.
- 6.11 Pertinent to this application are the following strategic elements of the 2009 Core Strategy.
- 6.12 Paragraph 17.2 sets out 'Challenge 6 to the city council in relation to 'Promoting health and well-being for all' This specifically notes that Sheffield already has a high proportion of elderly people and longer life expectancy – and will lead to further ageing of the city's population. Health and well-being mean providing for their needs, which will often benefit other groups as well. The challenge is to design environments that promote safety, health and a sense of well-being for all.
- 6.13 Policy CS33 promotes a focus of jobs and housing to within Stocksbridge (particularly to PDL within the urban framework).
- 6.14 In determining the extant planning permissions on the application site as noted above, the LPA paid regard to policies within the Core Strategy and the earlier UDP (as saved). These recognised that the site falls within a Housing Area (UDP H10), and as such the general principle for housing development is supported. CS47 addresses Open Space and the determination of the preceding application clarified the council's position that the application site is not designated as an open space or has important amenity value. The assessment of the proposal at outline stage referred to UDP Policy H14 including matters of accessibility. The application site was considered to be in a sustainable location with parade of local shops at the southern end of Pot House Lane, and other local services locally. The Supertram link bus route (approximately 3 buses an hour during the day) runs along Shay House Lane to the east of the site and connects to Stocksbridge town centre. No highways objections were raised by the Highways Authority to the proposed access plan.
- 6.15 The consideration and determination of 19/04594/REM took account of CS26 in relation to housing density which supports densities in new development of between 30 and 40 dwellings per hectare.
- 6.16 Core Strategy policy CS40 addresses affordable housing contribution through development, but only where practical or financially viable. Guideline GAH1 of the SPD requires a contribution to affordable housing on new developments where the site has a capacity for 15 or more dwellings. The site lies in the Stocksbridge/Deepear Affordable Housing Market Area where Guideline GAH2 of the SPD requires the level of affordable housing provision to be 10% of the

gross internal floor area of the development or equivalent provision as agreed with the Council.

- 6.17 Core Strategy Policy CS41 (Creating Mixed Communities) encourages housing developments to meet a range of housing needs – including a mix of prices, sizes, types and tenures, aligning with NPPF paragraph 8b.
- 6.18 Policy GE11 of the UDP seeks to ensure that the natural environment will be protected and enhanced. It expects development to respect and promote nature conservation and include measures to reduce any potentially harmful effects of development on natural features of value.
- 6.19 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 Sheffield 5-Year Housing Land Supply Monitoring Report (December, 2022) identifies a 3.63 years supply of deliverable housing site. This falls short of the 5 year requirement set out by NPPF, and as such suggests the tilted balance may come into play where housing provision is proposed.
- 6.20 The current Sheffield Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) recognises the application site at Pot House Lane as site with Planning Permission for housing – and accounts for those dwellings within its availability assessment.

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 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 site is acceptable in principle. This is further underlined by the extant planning permission at the site for 14 detached dwellings which were granted planning permission under the same policy context as the current proposals. Whilst that development was for market housing, the current application is for managed or assisted residential use by older people, 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 Sheffield'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.
- 7.4 As a 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 Sheffield and Rotherham Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2019) (Sheffield Hallam University) sets out at paragraph 7.20 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. The survey data identifies households headed by older people who need or want to move in the next five years. This revealed that approximately 5,400 households with older persons in the region alone expect to need to make alternative living arrangements across the SRHM in this period.
- 7.6 The implications and after-effects of the pandemic 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.
- 7.7 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 needs of specific groups demanded by NPPF.
- 7.8 The extant permission at the site is for 14 dwellings. The proposals would clearly deliver a much greater contribution towards meeting housing delivery,

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

and improve the 5-year housing requirements set out in NPPF. It is to be noted that with the uptake of care homes and assisted living capacity for the elderly, housing market benefits can accrue from the freeing of family sized housing vacated by residents of the proposals. In doing so a wider contribution to meeting the housing needs of the community can be realised.

Site Specific Considerations

- 7.9 The application is made in outline with all matters reserved apart from access. Only the principle of the development/use at the scale proposed and access arrangements are material to the determination of this application. Whilst an indicative site layout and design concept is offered to support the proposals it is critical that details of design, layout and final quantum of units provided are reserved matters, and that those remain flexible at this stage. A detailed scheme for a reserved matters application would respond to the specific requirements and conditions of the regulatory and market at that time.
- 7.10 The indicative layout scheme and design principles supporting the application illustrate broadly how the site would be able to accommodate the scale of use proposed, with massing and a split-level building across the sloping site allowing for a viable development whilst accommodating appropriate access and parking, as well as retention of greenspace to the site's periphery in order to accommodate biodiversity net gain. Integrated roof gardens and vegetated courtyards or atria will also deliver additional tree and planting opportunities. Development can be set away sufficiently from neighboring property boundaries so as to secure acceptable separation distances and to protect residential amenity of dwellings to Pot House Lane and to Linden Crescent.
- 7.11 Biodiversity considerations are addressed within the accompanying PEA and Bat Survey (Paul Hicking Associates) proportionate to an outline proposal. This clarifies that the demolition of the vacant 49 Linden Crescent to make way for safe site access would have no impact on protected species roosts, and that more broadly the ecological implications of the proposals are likely to reflect those as deemed acceptable under the approval of the existing permission at the site. This should afford sufficient reassurance that the principle of the development could be accommodated without the risk that prohibitive ecological considerations would later arise. Appropriate biodiversity net-gain will be secured through measures secured through any reserved matters application. This approach and sequence to ecological considerations actually goes beyond that found to be appropriate under the 2017 Outline and 2020 Full planning permissions at the site where ecological assessments were made in relation to the outline scheme only. The current ecological assessment of the site has confirmed no material change to the baseline ecological condition or value of the site since that time.

- 7.12 Residential amenity implications on neighbouring properties would be a matter reserved for subsequent approval once design options are finalised. However, the character of the proposed use is such that the facility would be an inherently 'good neighbour' use within the context of residential properties around the site and across the wider neighbourhood. The age and mobility profile of residents within the care village is such that outdoor recreation will be characterised by quiet enjoyment of the site grounds and integrated green spaces. It is material to the consideration of the application that the development of the Alpine Lodge Care Home on the opposite side of Pot House Lane has been accepted as an appropriate use within this area of Stocksbridge where a number of educational, leisure and care facilities relate well with the primary residential land use.
- 7.13 Low vehicular trip generation would arise from the establishment of a care village at the site, falling further in the evenings and during the night-time compared to the approved open market residential development. Low off-site trip generation would limit implications on the immediate highway network, with a great majority of residents as non-drivers or non-car owners. Notwithstanding this, public transport availability in the vicinity is good for residents with sufficient independence to utilise this.
- 7.14 Whilst a matter for reserved matters consideration following the evolution of a final design scheme, land stability and risk of subsidence is a material consideration. In this respect it can be seen that the extant permission at the site was not hindered by such considerations, and given the cessation of mining activity in the area, it stands that this baseline condition remains at the time of this proposal.
- 7.15 The application site was found not to constitute important open space (policy CS47), not be of any other landscape or heritage significance during consideration of the extant planning permission at the site. No change in circumstances in those respects have subsequently arisen. 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 needed specialized residential development.
8. Summary
- 8.1 The proposals can be seen to comply with relevant national and local adopted policy. In the context of the out-of-date status of the adopted development plan and absence of any other significant material considerations that might indicate otherwise, this application should be approved without delay in accordance with paragraph 11 of NPPF.

- 8.2 The proposals seek to positively utilise a highly sustainable site within the settlement's urban framework which currently offers limited public amenity or biodiversity value in its current condition, and is not recognised for its heritage or landscape value.
- 8.3 The council as LPA has accepted the principle of housing on the site under extant planning permission, made under the same planning policy context. Proposed access to the site is as permitted under the extant planning permission 19/04594/REM. 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. Conditions to an outline permission are invited in relation the provision of appropriate and necessary site-specific controls.
- 8.3 The proposals would serve to deliver a materially positive contribution towards specialist housing and care needs within Sheffield. Evidence that there is local need for such housing types is compelling. It is also material to the consideration of furthering housing delivery of all types across the city that the planning permission extant on the site has not been implement at time of writing. Market conditions and site-specific circumstances suggest that the important role the site can play in delivering much needed sustainable housing provision without developing beyond settlement frameworks are likely to be lost - unless the principle of the proposed development is supported through outline approval.
- 8.4 The proposals are considered to be sustainable, needed and deliverable. In the absence of other material considerations 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

MILLHOUSE

