

Part Demolition and Extension to Bushloe House to change the use from offices to residential flats (C2) and Erection of Care Home (C2) with associated parking, landscaping and ancillary works.



**Bushloe House, Station Road, Wigston, LE18
2DR**

Planning Statement

November 2023

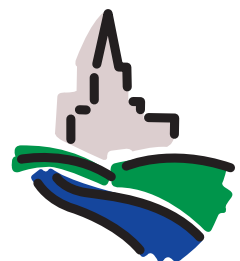


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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement supports an application for works on the site of the Oadby & Wigston Council Offices, Bushloe House, Station Road, Wigston, LE18 2DR. The proposed works comprise the demolition of the existing detached buildings to the west of the site and the modern 2 storey extension on the west side of Bushloe House. The remainder of Bushloe House will then be restored, extended and converted into 21 C2 flats. The erection of an 80 bed Care Home is proposed towards the west of the site. Additionally, a total of 53 parking spaces will be provided, including 4 disabled spaces.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Statement is to demonstrate that the proposed development is acceptable in planning terms, taking account of the development plan and other material considerations.
- 1.3 The Plans accompanying the application are as follows:
- 3918 AD(0) 01, 02C, 03A, 04, 05, 06, 07B, 10K, 11F, 12F, 13F, 14F, 15B, 16B, 17B, 50G, 51G, 52G, 53F, 54F, 55C, 56C plus 2309MAC-WIG-1 C & 2309MAC-WIG-2C.
- 1.4 Section 7 of this Statement summarises the range of technical work which has been undertaken. This is followed by a section describing the accordance of the



Figure 1: Existing Location Plan



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scheme with the Development Plan and this Statement concludes with an evaluation of the Planning Balance (section 9).

2. Site Context

- 2.1. Bushloe House is a Grade II Listed Building from the latter half of the 19th century. The listing was created on the 26th June 1987. A long two storey office extension to this building, with a single storey council chamber and pyramidal roof was built for the Oadby and Wigston Councils when the two Councils amalgamated in the 1970's.
- 2.2. Much of the site is well screened from public gaze by mature trees fronting Station Road.
- 2.3. The site is located within Wigston. It is located approximately 500m to the south west of Wigston's town centre, which provides a range of services and amenities. The site is also well located in terms of public transport, with bus stops immediately adjacent providing good access to both Wigston Train Station (in 6 minutes) and Leicester City Centre (in 36 minutes). The site is therefore in a highly sustainable location.



Figure 2: Bushloe House and its associated outbuildings



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3. Relevant Planning History

- 3.1. Oadby and Wigston Borough Council's planning application search facility reveals 5 previous planning applications within the proposal site in the past 20 years.
- 07/00508/LBC | Retention of alterations to form a fire escape with ramped approach from ground floor Committee Room | Approved Feb 2008
 - 10/00439/LBC | Installation of 15No. wall mounted air source heat pumps/air conditioning units | Approved Dec 2010
 - 13/00358/LBC | Demolition of timber offices & erection of fence with gate & brick up connecting door (Rev A) | Approved Jan 2014
 - 13/00417/FUL | Planning application for demolition of timber offices & erection of fence with gate & brick up connecting door (Rev A) | Approved
 - 17/00445/LBC | Add two additional windows to the rear elevation of the 1970's extension building to allow un-utilised space to be refurbished to form required meeting rooms | Approved

4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1. Determination of this application is to be made under Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, which requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2. The key aspects of national planning policy and the development plan that are of key relevance to the consideration of the proposal are highlighted as follows.

National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

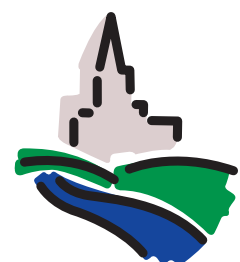
- 4.3. **Paragraph 2** of the NNPF states that '*Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise*'.
- 4.4. **Paragraph 8** outlines the three overarching objectives. These objectives seek to satisfy economic, social and environmental needs on a local and national level.
- 4.5. **Paragraphs 39-42** promotes and highlights the benefits of effective pre-application engagement between applicants, LPA's and consulting bodies.



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- 4.6. **Paragraph 60** highlights the need for housing requirements to be addressed in order to meet the Government's objective of sufficiently boosting housing supply.
- 4.7. **Paragraph 69** outlines the importance of small and medium sized sites to help meet this housing demand.
- 4.8. **Paragraph 82(d)** states that planning policies should be flexible enough to accommodate needs anticipated for in the plan, and to allow for new working practices.
- 4.9. **Paragraph 111** states that *'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.'*
- 4.10. **Paragraph 120** supports the use of brownfield sites and under-utilised land for new homes. Similarly, **Paragraph 122** requires decisions to reflect changes in demand for land.
- 4.11. **Paragraph 130** states that developments should function well **(b)** and sympathetic to local character and history while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change **(c)**. Development should also optimise the potential of a site **(e)**.
- 4.12. **Paragraph 155** expects that a positive strategy for the use of renewable and local energy will be adopted in proposed developments.
- 4.13. With regard to the impact on heritage assets, **paragraph 194** requires applications to assess the significance on any heritage assets affected. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' significance.
- 4.14. **Paragraph 197** requires application decisions to consider the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. It also highlights the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; as well as the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.
- 4.15. **Paragraph 199** explains that when considering the impact development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 4.16. **Paragraph 200** goes on to set out that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing



justification. Substantial harm or loss of grade II listed building should be exceptional.

- 4.17. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (Paragraph 202).

National Planning Practice Guidance: Needs for Older and Disabled People (2019)

- 4.18. Para 001 Ref ID 63-001-20190626** The need to provide housing for older people is critical. People are living longer lives and the proportion of older people in the population is increasing. Between 2016 and 2041 the number of persons 85 and over is expected to double from 1.6m to 3.2m. Offering older people a better choice of accommodation to suit their changing needs can help them live independently for longer, feel more connected to their communities and help reduce costs to the social care and health systems.

- 4.19. Para 016 Ref ID 63-016-20190626** Where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need.

The Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (2019)

- 4.20. The development plan for Oadby consists of the Borough of Oadby and Wigston Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted April 2019).

- 4.21. **Policy 1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development** states that *'all proposals must take into account of the broad aim of sustainable development; ensuring that development contributes positively towards ensuring a better quality of life for residents, now and for generations to come.'*

- 4.22. **Policy 2 Spatial Strategy for Development within the Borough** includes prioritising previously developed land in the Principal Urban Area (PUA).

- 4.23. **Policy 5 Improving Health and Wellbeing** requires proposals of 11 dwellings or more, or those which create over 1000. sq. m of non-residential floorspace to submit a Health Impact Assessment screening statement.

- 4.24. **Policy 6 High Quality Design and Materials** requires proposals to respect historic character, ensure patterns of development reflect surroundings, encourage sustainable travel and protect amenity.

- 4.25. **Policy 11 Housing Choices** stipulates that all residential development of 11+ dwelling should provide a housing mix to reflect the Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) as well as the general nature of the site and the character of the area. The 2017 HEDNA requires 30-40% 2 bed



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dwellings and 0-10% 1 bed dwellings for market housing and 25-30% 2 bed dwellings and 35-40% 1 bed dwellings for affordable housing.

- 4.26. **Policy 12 Housing Density** requires sites of over 0.3 ha in the PUA to provide an average density of at least 40 dwellings per hectare.
- 4.27. **Policy 13 Affordable Housing** requires developments of 11+ dwellings in Wigston to provide 20% affordable housing.
- 4.28. **Policy 15 Urban Infill Development** requires that proposals for infill development in urban areas on previously developed land are of a high quality, and will not have an adverse effect on the amenity of adjacent properties and will improve the character of the locale.
- 4.29. **Policy 26 Sustainable Transport and Initiatives.** All new development must provide the necessary highways and transport infrastructure to meet its needs.
- 4.30. **Policy 34 Car Parking** requires car parking standards in line with the requirement of the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide (LHDG), which requires one cycle parking space per 5 C3 dwellings. With regards to car parking, the LHDC refers to DCLG advice, which provides a general methodology for calculating requirements based on a number of factors.
- 4.31. **Policy 37 Biodiversity and Geodiversity** supports development proposals that proactively seek a net gain and conserve, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.
- 4.32. **Policy 38 Climate Change, Flood Risk and Renewable Low Carbon Energy** states that *'The Council will also expect all major-scale planning applications, including refurbishments (11 or more residential units or 1,000+ square metres of floor area) to be accompanied by a Sustainability / Energy Statement demonstrating how (potential) harmful emissions have been addressed and minimised'*.
- 4.33. **Policy 39 Sustainable Drainage and Surface Water** requires *'all proposals, including refurbishments (11 or more residential units or 1,000+ square metres of floor area) to incorporate appropriate Sustainable Drainage Systems in accordance with the latest National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and in agreement with the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Leicestershire'*.
- 4.34. **Policy 40 – Culture and Historic Environment Assets** outlines the Council's intention to conserve and enhance the Borough and its assets including nationally and locally listed buildings. Development must safeguard, conserve or enhance heritage assets.
- 4.35. **Policy 46 Infrastructure and Developer Contributions.** In accordance with Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations contributions through a S106 agreement will be required where necessary to make the development



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acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Residential Development Supplementary Planning Document (2019)

- 4.36. New housing development or extensions to existing dwellings must conform to separation distances unless there are exceptional circumstances that dictate otherwise. Separation distances do not normally allow distances of less than 22m between facing windows of two storey houses on level ground and, between facing windows and flank or secondary elevations, development should not rise above a line drawn at 25 degrees from the ground floor of the neighbouring dwelling fronting onto the new dwelling or extension.

Public Realm Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (2021)

- 4.37. Well-designed public realm will make best use of the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area, the way that it functions, and, seeks to meet the demands of the wider community.

5. The Proposed Development

- 5.1. The proposed development is a multifaceted proposal which can be split in to 4 main elements; demolition, restoration, extension and free standing new build.
- 5.2. **Demolition:** Much of the existing site, including buildings at the west of the site and the extension to Bushloe House are proposed for demolition. The original Bushloe House building will be retained. Figure 3 shows the area to be demolished, in red.
- 5.3. Within Bushloe House, some internal features including doors and walls are proposed for removal in order to facilitate restoration work within the original building. A detailed plan (AD(0) 07B) of the demolition in relation to the listed building is provided as part of this application.
- 5.4. **Restoration:** Internal restorations have been designed primarily around the central staircase, which is identified as a feature of significant historical and aesthetic value.
- 5.5. **Extension:** Following demolition of the existing extension, a new 3 storey extension is proposed. The intention is that the Council's extension should be demolished, as it detracts from the aesthetic of the original house and that a carefully planned extension is designed to 'plug in' where the Council extension and fire escape have detracted from the character of the site.



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5.6. The design draws its influence from the architectural styles of Bushloe House, realised in a contextual modern form. Tall windows, brick mullions, hipped roofs, and red brick are proposed, with yellow brick explored where deemed appropriate. The Heritage Statement, accompanying this application, sets out in considerable detail the nature and form of the extension and its relation to the restoration of the existing house.



Figure 3: Demolition Plan

5.7. **Free Standing New Build:** In place of the demolished buildings to the west of the site, an up to 3 storey, 80 bed care home is proposed. As the development of this facility affects the setting of the listed building its detailed design is considered in the accompanying Heritage Statement.



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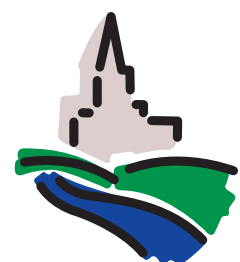


Figure 5: Proposed Site Plan

- 5.8. Development of this scale clearly requires parking provision. A total of 53 spaces are provided, including 4 for disabled users. As shown on the accompanying plans (specifically AD (0) 10K) they are spread around the site to satisfy both the apartment occupants and their visitors, as well as the various operational needs of the Care Home. The Transport Statement justifies their provision.
- 5.9. In order to facilitate the development, the Arboricultural Impact Assessment for the proposed development confirms the requirement to remove 2 no. category B trees, 7 no. category C trees and 1 no. category U tree.

6. Pre Application Discussions

- 6.1 A formal pre-application submission was made in September 2022 showing the basis of the scheme with the alterations and extensions to Bushloe House, along with the development of the care home to the west of the site.
- 6.2 The Council responded emphasising the importance of respecting the Grade II Listed Building, but agreeing that the principle of some form of residential development in use Classes C2 & C3 was appropriate. Any development must also respect the current surroundings and the site context and not propose a scheme that over-develops the site.



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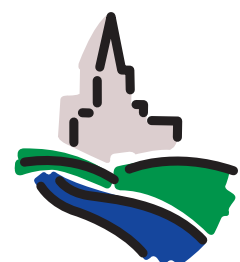
- 6.3 The Council's Heritage Officer acknowledged that the scheme at that time could bring worthwhile heritage benefits, but he felt that there could be significant indirect harm to the Listed Building.
- 6.4 Consequently, the scheme was refined and submitted to the Council in February 2023 and discussions were held to further explain the scheme. The Council agreed that the scheme was improved. They remained concerned that without further detail the three storey extension to the Listed Building (replacing the unfortunate existing extension and the single storey building to the front) may be of excessive scale and mass. The Conservation officer from the information provided considered that less than substantial harm would be caused and that the public benefits have not been sufficiently articulated.
- 6.5 Given the potential substantial public benefits of the scheme it was considered that a positive way forward was possible and it was recommended that the next stage should be the submission of a planning application. The submission should include sufficient evidence to fully support the need for the care home and take on board the comments in relation to the extension to the Listed Building. This is what the submission of the planning application now seeks to demonstrate.

7. Summary of Technical Information

- 7.1. This section considers and summaries the key conclusions of technical reports, which have been prepared in support of this pre-application.

Arboricultural Impact Assessment (Origin Environmental)

- 7.2. This assessment considers the impact of the proposed physical work and surveys 44 individual trees on site. To implement the Proposed Development there will be a requirement to remove 2 no. category B trees, 7 no. category C trees and 1 no. category U tree.
- 7.3. There are a number of TPO's on site as illustrated in Appendix 6 of the AIA. To protect these trees, and all other remaining trees and their RPA's a construction exclusion zone should be created, which will be assessed by an Arboricultural Consultant, prior to the commencement of construction work.
- 7.4. It is concluded that the proposed tree loss is of low arboricultural merit and of limited visibility from the wider environment. As such the principles for refusal within the NPPF are not applicable and the proposed development is in line with the Local Plan.



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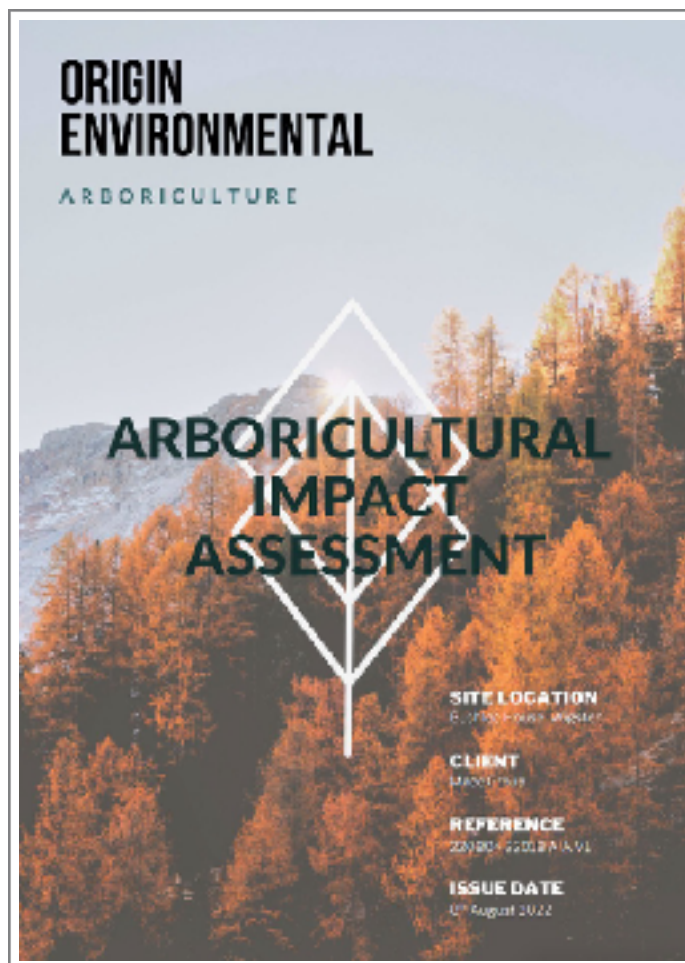


Figure 6: AIA

Heritage Impact Statement (PCPT)

- 7.5. PCPT, the Statement's author, have been involved since the initial stages of development. Their drawings have been prepared as a starting point for discussions with the LPA and Conservation Officer.
- 7.6. Their assessment of Bushloe House finds that the site is of significant historical and aesthetic value. Its evidential and communal values are comparatively lower, but remain moderate.
- 7.7. The impact assessment relates directly to the proposed part demolition restoration, conversion and extension of Bushloe House and also address how the proposals aim to protect, preserve and celebrate Bushloe House as a fine and rare example of in situ Christopher Dresser design.
- 7.8. Internal restorations have been designed around the central staircase, which is identified as a feature of significant historical and aesthetic value due to its design and associations with Christopher Dresser. The intention is that the staircase and its decoration once again become a celebrated feature of the house, with internal circulation designed so that all building users are required



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PROPOSED WEST ELEVATION 1:100

to use, or at the very least pass through. Opening the staircase during ‘public heritage days’ is also considered.

- 7.9. Externally, the overarching focus is to remove the existing extension, which is identified as a detraction to the appreciation of the heritage asset and to plan the new extension so as to cover the damage to the original building where possible, whilst creating a more considerate extension. The proposed Care Home will also share this considerate design.
- 7.10. Submitted plan 3918 AD (0) 06 draws out the range of heritage benefits of the proposed development in enhancing the fabric of Bushloe House.
- 7.11. In terms of the physical changes to the listed building and its setting it is considered that overall the proposals are a beneficial change, which create **no harm**. With the care home it is considered that there is **less than substantial harm at the medium to lower end of the scale**.

Health Impact Assessment Screening Opinion (Landmark Planning)

- 7.12. The assessment undertaken clearly demonstrated that there should be no deleterious impacts on health from the proposed development and that there should be many positive benefits; not least in terms of better health support available at the site (including the 24 hour presence of registered nurses and



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active liaison with other health care providers). This compares very favourably with residents occupying individual dwellings in the wider community.

Transport Statement and Travel Plan (Hub Transport Planning Ltd.)

- 7.13. The site is in a very sustainable location for both walking / cycling to a wide range of local facilities, including the nearby Wigston Town Centre and public transport in the form of bus travel.
- 7.14. The proposed development will result in fewer trips to the site compared with the extant use and will not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety (in the context of the NPPF).
- 7.15. The level of parking proposed is considered appropriate for the development mix, while the swept path analysis demonstrates that all required vehicles will be able to enter and leave the site in a forward gear.
- 7.16. A Travel Plan will be promoted by an appointed Co-ordinator upon the construction of the development. This will highlight facilities within walking/ public transport distance and encourage site users to consider alternative options from single occupancy cars.
- 7.17. Consequently, along with the highly sustainable location of the site it is concluded that there are no transport or traffic reasons why the development site should not be granted planning permission.

Need Assessment (Carterwood)

- 7.17 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), as set out in paras 4.17 & 4.18 above, explains that the need to provide housing for older people at a national level is critical and that there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing. Local authorities should therefore take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need.
- 7.18 Carterwood have undertaken a comprehensive study of the local requirement for both Care Quality Commission registered care home bedrooms and private housing-with-care. This demonstrates that even in this national context of 'critical' need above, the position in Oadby and Wigston is worse than other areas of the country. Para. 30.6 of their report points out that there is currently no existing private housing-with-care supply in the Oadby and Wigston Borough, with a shortfall of almost 200 units. This is contrary to Government guidance; the objectives of the Adult Social Care Reform White Paper; and, the Older People's Housing Taskforce, which seek to increase supply; improve the variety of housing and care options for older people and, to explore ways to unblock any challenges.
- 7.19 As at the 2021 Census, over 81% of households within the Oadby and Wigston Borough, where the household reference person is aged over 65 years, were owned outright. This compares with an average figure for England and Wales of 71.2%. Such older homeowners are unlikely to be eligible for 'affordable' housing-with-care developments. It is therefore



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critical that private supply is made available to meet such requirements. It is also very important for other social policy reasons, including promoting downsizing to make more efficient use of the existing housing stock. Furthermore, it will allow older people to remain in their local community in an environment where they can maintain their independence and friendships for as long as possible, with the associated health and wellbeing benefits from moving to such developments with in-care facilities provided (and potentially less burden on the NHS).

7.20 In terms of care home provision, the report shows that by 2026 (the earliest this facility could be open) the shortfall of 'minimum market standard' care home beds is 525 and 73, in the market catchment area and Oadby and Wigston Borough, respectively. These numbers increase when assessed on the basis of need for 'specialist dementia' care beds, with a net need for 612 and 81 beds, in the two assessed catchments, respectively. The report assumes that existing supply will remain constant (and not decline as is common), and all existing planned bed spaces are developed, which potentially over-estimates supply. Even on this basis, there is a substantial identified shortfall of care home beds in the Oadby and Wigston Borough.

7.21 If one considers the need for care beds at the same specification (full en-suite wet rooms) as the proposed care home, the situation is worse. The figures rise to a net need for 1,477 full market standard care home beds in the market catchment area and 389 in the local authority area, while for dementia provision the figures are 667 and 131 in the two catchments, respectively.

7.22 Leicestershire County Council's Accommodation Strategy for Older People identifies a current and increasing need for housing-with-care, with existing provision being notably below the anticipated level required to meet the needs of the increasing number of older people. It advises that there is a need to ensure accommodation for older people is given high priority in housing strategy decisions.

7.23 The Leicestershire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment identifies a significant need for care home accommodation for those with complex needs, particularly those requiring nursing and dementia care. This is evident in both the market and Oadby and Wigston catchments, where the percentage of care home bedrooms (at minimum providing en-suite facilities) and full market standard level (providing full wet room en-suites) is some way below the national average. Those older people requiring nursing and dementia 24-hour care in a care home need high quality, spacious, infection-control compliant accommodation, best suited to catering to their on-going care needs.

7.24 Consequently, there is an overriding need for the accommodation proposed both in the national 'critical' context and more particularly in Oadby and Wigston, which falls below the national average, where there is an identified need for both high quality care home beds and private housing-with-care.



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Environmental Noise Report (Noise Harvest)

- 7.25 The Assessment undertaken showed that appropriate internal noise levels within habitable rooms could be achieved by specifying appropriate glazing and ventilation systems. With such provision at habitable façades the calculations indicate that internal ambient noise levels within proposed habitable rooms would be less than 35 dBA during the daytime and 30 dBA at night-time.
- 7.26 The proposed glazing and ventilation will also achieve the requirements to meet Approved Document Part O and the WHO guidelines for sleep disturbance.
- 7.27 Noise to outdoor amenity spaces is predicted to meet the upper limit of 55 dB LAeq,T in areas towards the front of the site facing Station Road; although in the private amenity areas, further into the site much lower figures are achieved to 45 db LAeq,T and below. Please see Fig 14 below.
- 7.28 The noise from the car park is predicted not to be greater than the typical measured background.

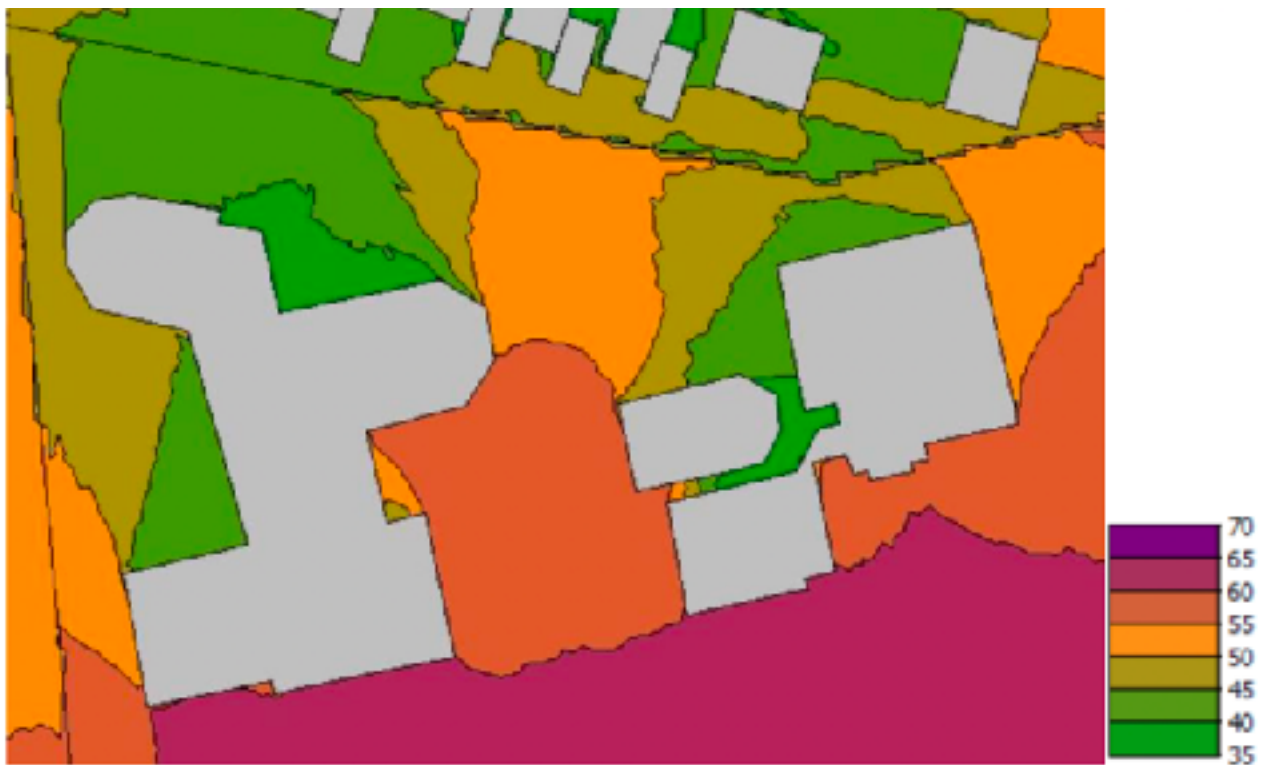


Figure 14 - Predicted noise levels in amenity space

Phase 1 Ground Contamination Study (Geo Risk Management)

- 7.29 No evidence of potential significant contamination was noted during the site visit or following the extensive desk top evaluation.



- 7.30 There are no records of any sites within 250 m of the study area that are potential pollution hazards (including active landfills and significant or major pollution incidents).
- 7.31 Radon protection measures are not required.
- 7.32 There are no potential significant off-site sources of contamination or ground gas have been identified that could affect the proposed development.

Landscape (Capeling)

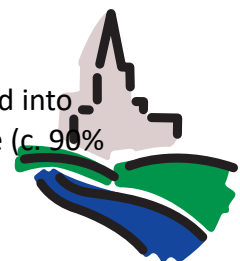
- 7.33 A landscape scheme for both hard and soft provision accompanies the application. The planting provides a wide range of both trees and shrubs of a largely native varieties, specifically chosen and located to complement the existing substantial planting that is already present on site.

Ecology and Biodiversity (Wharton)

- 7.34 The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal indicated that there are no key constraints to the proposed development. Retained trees should be protected during the construction phase and any that must be removed should be replaced with native species. No further surveys are considered to be necessary provided the roof structure of the Grade II listed building is retained as is and a bat method statement produced to reduce any residual impacts on retained roosting features to a negligible level.
- 7.35 The Biodiversity analysis indicates that there will be a net gain of 8.16%.

Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy (CTS Design).

- 7.36 The site has a very slight fall from east to west with levels ranging slightly from c.92.5m AOD within the eastern site to c.91.4m AOD along the western site boundary.
- 7.37 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and the risk is very low from all flood sources.
- 7.38 The geology and soils data suggests that a surface water management strategy led by infiltration is likely to be unviable. However, infiltration testing in line with the BRE Digest 365 methodology should be completed as part of the Ground Investigation works at detailed design stage. A Surface Water Drainage Strategy has been prepared to demonstrate that a sustainable drainage solution can be provided for the proposed development largely in accordance with current best practice and meeting the requirements of Leicestershire County Council as the LLFA.
- 7.39 Site runoff will be attenuated through an attenuation tank before being discharged into the existing combined sewer to the south of the site, at a significantly reduced rate (c. 90% reduction).



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- 7.40 A Foul Water Drainage Strategy has been prepared to demonstrate that a drainage solution can be provided.

Energy Statement (EPS)

- 7.41 The Energy Statement outlines a commitment reduce energy consumption through the adoption of enhanced insulation standards and improved heating, ventilation and air conditioning, as well as lighting efficiencies compared to current Building Regulations.
- 7.42 Of the range of different low carbon and renewable technologies possible, air to water source heat pumps have been identified as the most appropriate technology for the proposed development.
- 7.43 It is calculated via SBEM (simplified building energy model the official method for calculating energy performance) that at least 4.65% less carbon dioxide will be generated compared with current Building Regulation standards.

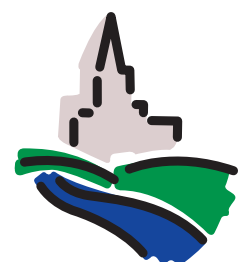
8. Accordance with the Development Plan

Principle of Development

- 8.1. The proposed development seeks to convert / develop office and depot use and replace with C2 residential accommodation. The site is located in a generally residential, highly sustainable location, with excellent access to public transport and local facilities including Wigston Town Centre.
- 8.2. The principle of such a development within an already developed, under utilised site in this location should be entirely acceptable. In this regard the proposal conforms with Local Plan Policies 1, 2 and 11 and NPPF paras. 8, 69, 82, 120 and 122.

Amenity

- 8.3. With regards to privacy, the proposal limits the extent to which residential windows face one another. There are no directly facing windows which fall beneath the 22m distance requirement (from the Residential Development SPD) as a result of the proposed extension.
- 8.4. The overall impact of the proposed buildings on existing surrounding dwellings to the west and north will be limited. The proposed extension is broadly in keeping with the size and scale of the existing extension, and will not further encroach on neighbouring properties. The proposed Care Home will be of a larger scale. However, it remains over 22m from existing dwellings, and is well screened on its western boundary.
- 8.5. In terms of amenity, the proposal accords with The Development Plan, and specifically the Residential Development SPD.



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Scale, Layout and Design

- 8.6. The overarching principle of the proposed design of the extension and Care Home (which has been submitted as a basis for ongoing discussion) is to reflect and compliment the original Bushloe House building.
- 8.7. The overall scale and mass of the proposed extension will be broadly in keeping with the existing extension. Although the proposed Care Home is larger than the existing buildings at the west of the site. The increased scale can be considered appropriate in this site, given the space available and its location within a relatively densely built area of Wigston, which is also well screened by mature trees from the public realm. The increased scale of the proposed Care Home helps to optimise the potential of the site.
- 8.8. In this regard, it is considered that the proposal is in keeping with Policies 6, 12 and 40 and NPPF paragraph 130.

Heritage

- 8.9. The accompanying Heritage Impact Assessment, as summarised within section 6 of this Statement, outlines how the proposal will enhance Bushloe House, a Grade 2 Listed Building.
- 8.10. External alterations, namely the removal of the existing out of character extension in place of a new extension will provide a clear enhancement to the asset. The existing extension does very little to complement or enhance the heritage asset. The proposal draws its influence from the architectural styles of Bushloe House, realised in a contextual modern style. Tall windows, brick mullions, hipped roofs, and red and yellow brick are incorporated. The proposed Care Home building has equally been designed to reflect its positioning near to the listed building.
- 8.11. Internal improvements are also proposed. These will centre around the highlighting of the existing central staircase, which will form a central point to be used by future residents.
- 8.12. In terms of the physical changes to the listed building and its setting it is considered that overall the proposals are a beneficial change, which create **no harm**. With the care home it is considered that there is **less than substantial harm at the medium to lower end of the scale**.
- 8.13. With respect to accordance with the development plan, this proposal accords with Policies 6 and 40 which are concerned with high quality design, conserving and enhancing the Borough's unique cultural heritage, as well NPPF paras. 199 to 202.



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Transport

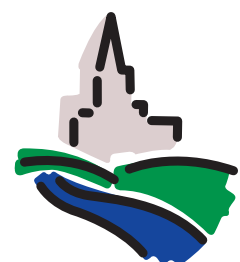
- 8.14. The submitted Transport Statement confirms that the proposed development will result in fewer vehicles movements than the existing operation from the site, as the headquarters of Oadby and Wigston Borough Council. The site access junction will provide a safe and suitable access to the proposed development. As such, there are no unacceptable impacts on highway safety .
- 8.15. With regard to car parking, The development proposes 30 parking spaces for the Care Home and 33 parking spaces for the apartments. Care Home parking has been calculated based on the Care Home TRICS Parking Assessment, which concludes an average resident to parking ratio of 0.35. An enhanced ratio of 0.41 is proposed. The required apartment car parking provision has been calculated based on the DCLG calculation, which requires 35 spaces.
- 8.16. The Transport Statement confirms that the proposal is acceptable in terms of parking and highways, and accords with Local Plan Policy 34 and NPPF para. 111.

Arboriculture

- 8.17. The accompanying Arboricultural Impact Assessment confirms the removal of 2 no. category B trees, 7 no. category C trees and 1 no. category U trees.
- 8.18. To protect the remaining trees and their RPA's a construction exclusion zone will be created, which will be assessed by an Arboricultural Consultant prior to commencement.
- 8.19. Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and should be retained wherever possible (NPPF para. 131). It is concluded that the proposed tree loss is of low arboricultural merit and of limited visibility from the wider environment, especially given the retention of the substantial and mature trees to Station Road; while the replacement landscape scheme will more than fully compensate for the limited loss. As such the principles for refusal within the NPPF are not applicable and the proposed development is in line with the Local Plan Policy 37.

Ecology & Biodiversity

- 8.20. The Preliminary Ecological Appraisal that there is very little ecology to be concerned about with the development of this site. No further surveys are considered to be necessary provided the roof structure of the Grade II listed building is retained as is and a bat method statement is produced to reduce any residual impacts on retained roosting features to a negligible level.
- 8.21. A Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment also accompanies this application. It shows that there will be a Net Gain of 8.16% in line with Local Plan Policy 37 and NPPF para. 174.



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Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy

- 8.22 The site is within Flood Zone 1 and the risk is very low from all flood sources.
- 8.23 A surface water management strategy is unlikely to be viable due to the nature of the geology, although infiltration testing will be carried out at the detailed design stage. The Surface Water Drainage Strategy submitted demonstrates that a sustainable drainage solution can be provided. An attenuation tank will allow discharge from the site to the existing combined sewer at a reduction rate of c. 90%.
- 8.24 A Foul Water Drainage Strategy has been prepared to demonstrate the drainage solution.
- 8.25 The Assessment and Strategy look to avoid flood risk and are in accordance with actively managing surface water run off through sustainable drainage techniques including the use of permeable surfacing. Consequently, they are in conformity with Local Plan Policies 38 & 39 as well as NPPF para. 167.

Energy

- 8.26 It is proposed to reduce energy consumption through enhanced insulation standards and improved heating, ventilation and air conditioning, as well as lighting efficiencies compared with current Building Regulations.
- 8.27 Air to water heat pumps have been identified as the most appropriate technology for using renewable energy in the proposed development. Overall it is calculated that at least 4.65% less carbon dioxide will be generated compared with current Building Regulation standards.
- 8.28 Accordingly it is considered that the energy proposals satisfy Local Plan Policy 38 in relation to renewable low energy carbon as well as NPPF para. 155.

9. Planning Balance

- 9.1. This Planning Statement accompanies and supports a pre-application submission for the change of use from Class E to Class C2 (for an 80 bed care home and 21 supported apartments), incorporating the demolition, restoration, extension and new buildings on the site of Bushloe House and its grounds.
- 9.2. The proposed plans and all the accompanying supporting statements provide a clear explanation of the proposals.
- 9.3. As the site is located in a generally residential, highly sustainable location, with excellent access to public transport and local facilities including Wigston Town Centre the principle of development should be unimpeachable. The issue is more one of detail: are there any matters that would prove insurmountable obstacles to consent.



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- 9.4. More technical issues, such as ground contamination, transport, drainage, noise and health impact, do not raise any concerns of significance.
- 9.5. As there is a listed building on the site this is a major issue that must be addressed in considerable detail. Consequently, a Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared. This has established that the part demolition and extension to Bushloe House is considered a beneficial change to its physical fabric and setting, which creates **no harm**. For the new-build care home the view is that there is **less than substantial harm at the medium to lower end of the scale**.
- 9.6. Paras. 199 to 202 of the NPPF address the issue of harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset and give great weight to the asset's conservation. *"Any harm to... the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification."* (NPPF 200).
- 9.7. *"Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."* (NPPF 202).



- 9.8. The HIA (para. 7.1) lists a number of heritage benefits of the scheme of which the most substantial are also summarised above in para. 8.10 & 8.11 of this Planning Statement. See also submitted plan 3918 AD (06).



- 9.9. The key issues to address in the planning balance are the public benefits and the optimum viable use.
- 9.10. The Carterwood Need Assessment summarised in paras. 4.17 to 4.18 and 7.17 to 7.24 above draws out the national planning policy guidance. It shows that nationally “*the need to provide housing for older people is critical*” and “*Where there is an identified unmet need for specialist housing, local authorities should take a positive approach to schemes that propose to address this need.*”
- 9.11. What the Carterwood report does is review the local situation in the Borough and a realistic market catchment area of a 5 mile radius. This clearly demonstrates that in a national context of *critical need* the Borough and market area are significantly worse than the national average. “There is currently no private housing-with-care supply in the Oadby and Wigston Borough. This is contrary to government guidance, the objectives of the Adult Social Care Reform White Paper and the Older Person’s Housing Task Force....” The conclusion could be drawn that the need is therefore beyond critical.
- 9.12. Locally, this is reinforced by Leicestershire County Council’s Accommodation Strategy for Older People, which identifies a current and increasing need for housing-with-care, with existing provision being notably below the anticipated level required to meet the needs of the increasing number of older people in the area. It advises that there is a need to ensure accommodation for older people is given high priority in housing strategy decisions.
- 9.13. There is therefore a more than critical need in public benefit terms for this development and this proposal is fully in accordance with the policy imperatives of the NPPF in its guidance of how to undertake decision making in the context of less than substantial harm to a heritage asset.
- 9.14. It should be noted also that not only are their also heritage benefits of the proposal, as listed above, but this proposal is the optimum viable use. In a location such as this, in the heart of an urban area, it cannot be realistically be appropriate that an individual private residence on over a hectare of land (density one dwelling per hectare) should be acceptable in sustainability terms; let alone realistically having any market appeal. Instead, the restoration of the residential use of the site more closely matches the original use and can be considered *the optimum viable use. (NPPF 202).*

Conclusion

- 9.15. The site is in a highly sustainable location. This design of this scheme is a sensitive and appropriate one to the site and its wider area. It has respected the heritage asset of Bushloe House and produced what should be a very attractive solution in a difficult development environment.



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- 9.16. The public benefits of providing substantial specialist housing for older people (that is acknowledged nationally and even more locally to have a critical under supply) can only be commended. Consequently, the public benefits of the scheme should easily override any less than substantial harm to a heritage asset, especially where it is considered that any such harm is very much at the medium to lower end of the scale.
- 9.17. The proposed development is in accordance with the adopted development plan for the Borough. Therefore, planning permission should be granted without delay in accordance with paragraph 11(c) of the NPPF and the requirements of Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Peter Wilkinson

November 2023

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