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Proposed alterations and extensions to Cherrytrees Care 15 – 17 Claremont Avenue Woking GU22 7SF



Design Statement

18th December 2023 – P5 – for Planning

Amber Architecture Limited

30 Barrington Drive

Harefield, Middlesex UB9 6RL

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Proposed alterations and extensions, Cherrytrees Care

Design Statement

Introduction

This Design Statement is in support of a planning application for proposed alterations and extensions to the existing Cherrytrees Care supported living facility to provide improved accommodation, and should be read in conjunction with drawings and other documents submitted herewith.

Claremont Avenue is located approximately 1 km to the south of Woking Town Centre, accessed from Guildford Road. The site is located on the west side of Claremont Avenue.

The existing facility comprises 2 properties (nos. 15 and 17) which have been extensively altered and extended over time, in some cases in an ad hoc fashion, and which now comprises the current facility.

Cherrytrees Care was established in 1985 as a residential care service for male adults with mental health problems and has always achieved the highest rating under CQC registration. In October 2010, Cherrytrees Care made the decision to change its status to a 24/7 Supported Living for male adults with mental health difficulties to provide a recovery service that encourages service users to progress to a more independent life.

This high-quality and cost-effective recovery service has a team of qualified and experienced professionals including: Qualified Mental Health Nurses, Clinical Psychologist, Assistant Psychologist, Dramatherapist, Music Therapist, Personal Fitness Trainer, Senior Mental Health Support Workers and Support Workers providing 24/7 care and support to our service users.

A Supporting Statement by Cherrytrees Care accompanies this document.

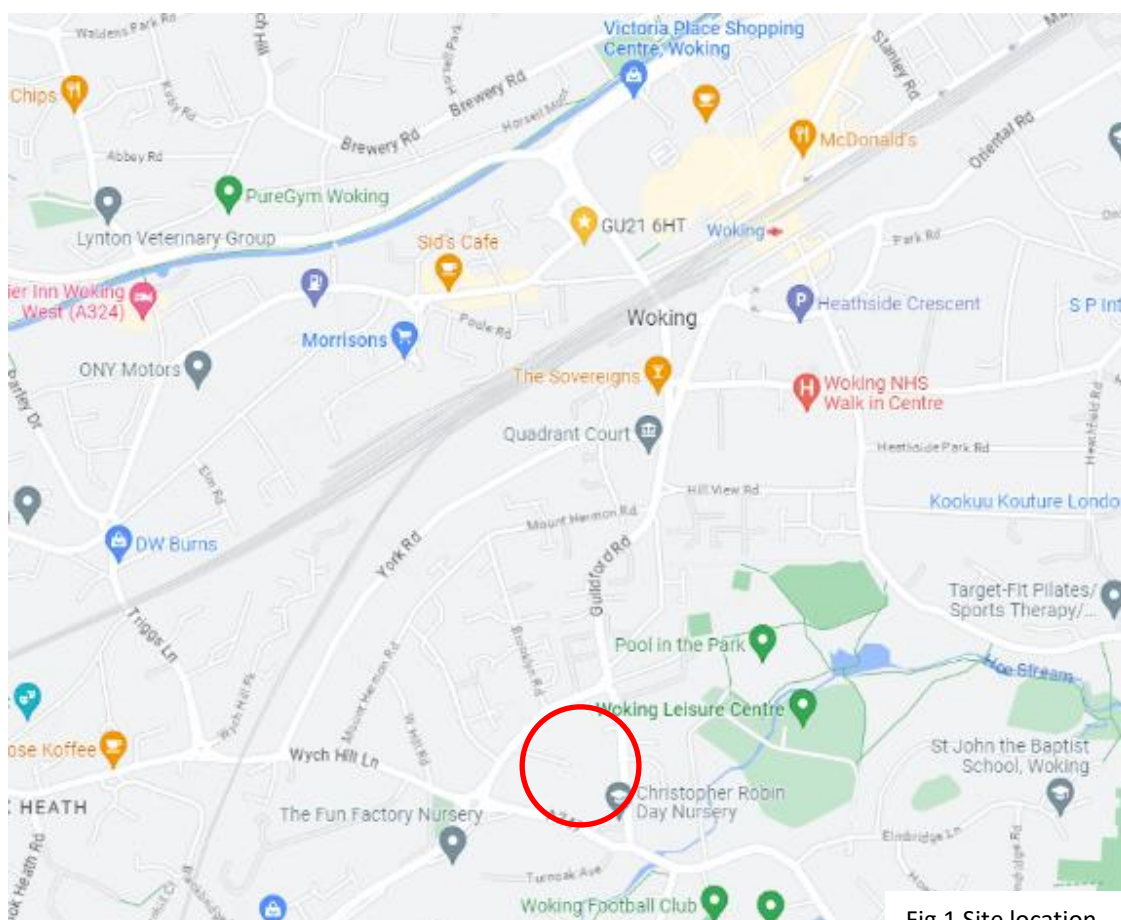


Fig.1 Site location

The site

The site which accommodates the proposal consists of a number of separate buildings and facilities.

Main building – 15-17 Claremont Avenue, which contains;

- Main entrance
- Office / administration area
- Conference room
- Communal TV lounge and conservatory
- Kitchen and communal dining room
- 12 residential rooms, all with en-suite facilities
- 2 no. 2 bed flats
- Laundry
- Staff rest area

Separate detached 2 storey building to rear – 4 x 1 bed flats

Garden building – gym equipment

The End House – 5 bedrooms with shared facilities

The main part of the site comprises a plot approximately 60m x 32m, with The End house providing an additional 45m x 21m to the west. The entire site comprises circa 0.65 acres.

Proposal

The existing facility comprises 2 properties (nos. 15 and 17) which have been extensively altered and extended over time, in some cases in an ad hoc fashion, and which now forms the current facility. Cherrytrees Care consider that the fragmented planning and layout of the facility does not allow efficient circulation around the building, and therefore does not enable the most effective care to the residents.

The applicant has been considering ways to improve and enhance the current facility to benefit service users, improve administration and provide more efficient support.

The purpose of the proposed works to Cherrytrees Care is to increase the quality and depth of services the operator provides to their clients and to the community. The proposed plans centre around increasing the quality of communal spaces and facilities with the additions of a purpose built 'Music Therapy Room', Quiet/Therapy Room, Activity/Games Room, meeting rooms and office space.

These additions and improvements will directly benefit service users and allow them to easily access better resources on site. This facilitates their rehabilitation, recovery and integration back into the wider community.

The proposal is to make alterations to the existing building, and to extend to provide improved facilities.

- Demolition of the existing conservatory.
- Alterations to the existing entrance and lobby area.
- Conversion of existing room 3 to games room; relocation of conference room to provide a family room.
- New staircase.
- Alterations to existing first floor rooms 4 and 5.
- 2 storey extension to existing entrance area, providing new welcoming entrance, double height lobby with galleried void to new first floor circulation space above. Open spacious lobby into existing building.
- First floor extension to existing building to rear, providing new office accommodation and conference room above existing admin area and family room.
- 2 storey rear extension adjacent to the admin and conference area, providing new room 3, quiet room and music room at ground floor, with offices and an addition residential room at first floor.

Summary of Areas

Existing GIA	GF	= 381.9m ²	
	FF	= <u>212.6m²</u> (133.6 + 79)	
	Total	= 594.5m²	
To be demolished	conservatory	= 14m ²	
	Room 4 ensuite	= <u>4m²</u>	
	Total	= 18m²	
Proposed GIA	GF	= 79.2m ² (includes 14m ² demolished = net increase 65.2m ²)	
	FF	= <u>196.2m²</u> (includes 4m ² demolished = net increase <u>192.1m²</u>)	
	Total	= 275.3m²	257.3m²

Total areas

Existing	594.5m ²
Demolished	18.0m ²
Net existing	576.5m ²
Total of extended building	865.7m ²
Net additional floorspace	271.2m ² (865.7 – 594.5)

Design approach

The project brief that has been developed along with the client comprises:

- Improving the entrance experience, creating a larger lobby area, reception area, more natural light and uninterrupted view to the street frontage
- Improving the quality and quantity of office space with more accommodation at first floor level
- Creating a first floor link between the 2 original properties (15 and 17 Claremont Avenue)
- Providing one additional resident room
- Utilising views and access to the garden area
- Creating a link that visually ties the various elements of the building together

The Client has an aspiration to develop the entrance and immediately behind and above the existing built form in the centre of the current building. The presented design is the result of having looked at the existing operational requirements, layout and circulation, building construction and structure, layout and levels, together with the proximity to adjoining properties and boundaries, considering potential impact, overlooking and/or overshadowing.

The new developed area is located centrally on the site, utilising existing accommodation and built form where possible, and minimising any fenestration on the flank walls.

Pre-Application

Proposals were submitted for Pre-Application advice in July 2023, and a written response was received dated 9th September (Ref PREAPO/2023/0023).

A summary of the advice received includes:

Whilst the extension and improvement of the existing C2 facility can be considered broadly acceptable in principle in my view, I have concerns about the design and appearance of the central section of the extension which links the two main buildings. This could however be addressed by amending the design of this element and I am happy to review any revised proposals for this element. I am also concerned about the potential drainage and flood risk implications which would need to be addressed through the submission of a Flood Risk Assessment and sustainable drainage information.

A flood risk assessment and drainage strategy report accompanies this planning application.

Subsequent options for redesigning the central entrance element were submitted to the planning officer on 18th September with 3 alternative designs, giving revised aesthetic appearance and sections indicating the view out, and explaining that the Client's priorities for the entrance are:

- a) that the entrance is welcoming, and
- b) that there is the maximum possible visibility to the Claremont Avenue kerb-side from the interior of the building at first floor as possible. One important reason for this is so that it is possible to clearly see when an ambulance has arrived.

We offered options A, B and C, with option B being our preference as we felt it dealt best with the Client's priorities, and also addressed the concerns of the planning officer regarding the aesthetic.

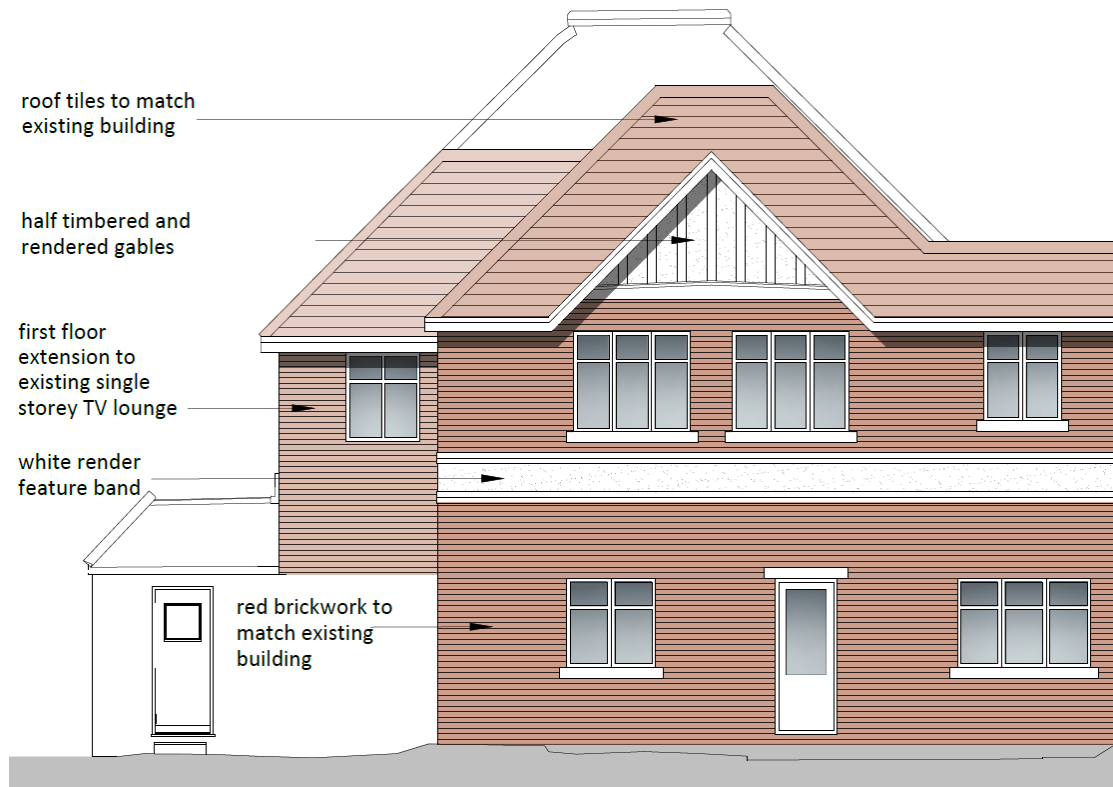
An email response from the planning officer was received on 3rd November 2023;

in my view Option B could be acceptable depending on its detailed design and the quality of materials and finishes etc.

Following receipt of the pre-application update, we have amended the entrance design, and now submit detailed proposals for consideration as a full planning application.

Aesthetic and Materials

Materials for the new building will match the existing, with red facing brick and red/brown plain roof tiles on pitched roofs. A schedule of external materials will be provided with the full planning application.



Roof form

Linking the two elements of the existing building through at roof level is not wholly possible without a number of awkward details, and therefore we have adopted the approach of a pitched roof for the new extension linked on the north side, with a flat roofed section which forms the link on the south side – this provides better potential for simple detailing at junctions. Flat roof sections behind the pitched roofs are incorporated to enable the two roof forms to link visually, and to minimise the height, scale and mass of the new roofs. We would point out that there are 3 areas of flat roof that currently exist, and the proposed flat roof areas are comparable in size.

Streetscene

We are conscious of the view from Claremont Avenue, with the separate and slightly different styles, and the 'gap' between the 2 original properties. The new entrance will use sympathetic materials (plain tiled roof) but will maximise the use of glass so as not to compete with one or other of the existing buildings. The pitched roof to the rear extension is hipped down in the centre to minimise the visual height and maintain the 'gap' between the two parts of the building when seen from the front.



Detailing

Details from the existing buildings have been repeated in the new design; the wide render banding on no. 15 is utilised on the new extension, and this will assist when the first floor extension to the existing office and conference area is constructed as the new work and existing will inevitably differ slightly.

Rear facing gables to the new extension have also borrowed details from the front elevation of no. 17.



Access

Some areas of the existing facility are wheelchair accessible, and this will remain unchanged. Level access into the building will be possible via the new main entrance, and access around the majority of the ground floor reception, office, dining area and rooms 8 and 9 are all at the same level and accessible.

The original building at no. 17 is approximately 500mm lower, and although providing a ramp internally has been considered, the length of this would prevent other facilities being used effectively. Level access to the lower level is possible via a separate entrance at the rear.

There is currently no lift in the building, and there are no plans as part of this development to provide one.

From a management approach, Cherrytrees are comfortable with the above arrangement providing the range of access and care for their service users. The operator continuously reviews these requirements and will adapt the premises as need arise.

Conclusion

The proposed alterations and extensions will achieve the aspirations of Cherrytrees Care, to improve and expand the current facility, provide enhanced accommodation for staff and service users, and provide a more coherent building layout.

The design of the entrance area provides a new, open and light space to enter the facility and receive visitors and allow circulation across the building at both ground and first floor levels. Visually the design sits well with the 2 existing buildings and does not compete. The roof height is kept to a minimum to maintain views of the sky between the 2 wings from the street side.

The rear extension has a sympathetic style which ties the 2 buildings together and addresses the rear communal gardens, providing views and access to the rest of the facility.

