

# Land West of Longford Park Road and South of Canal Lane, Bodicote

## Planning Statement

Prepared on behalf of Mercian Developments Ltd

November 2022

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Barton Willmore, now Stantec, has prepared this Planning Statement (incorporating Extra Care Needs Assessment) on behalf of our client, Mercian Developments Ltd ("the Applicant"), in support of a planning application submitted to Cherwell District Council ("the Council") seeking full planning permission for the erection of a new residential care home on a vacant plot of land within the Longfield Park residential development.

1.2 The application seeks full planning permission for:

***Erection of new 128-bed residential care home (Use Class C2) together with associated access, parking and landscaping.***

1.3 This Planning Statement is intended to demonstrate the extent to which the proposed development is compliant with all relevant aspects of the Development Plan, and the reasons as to why we believe planning permission should be granted.

### **Existing Residents and Staff**

1.4 Before proceeding, we should first acknowledge that, if permission is granted, two existing care facilities would in time be closed and relocated to the new development. We would like to assure all current residents, relatives and staff that such a transfer would be part of a managed process and further consultation would be held with them regarding the transition process, following the grant of planning permission.

### **Benefits of the Proposed Development**

- The Proposed Development delivers a net gain in the number of C2 bedspaces, ensuring that there is no net loss of existing bedspaces, and makes a reasonable allowance for future population growth.
- The Proposed Development will provide a series of new, purpose built C2 bedspaces which will be designed to meet modern-day standards and best practices, which will help staff to better meet the needs of residents.
- The Proposed Development includes a series of ancillary facilities, including a hairdressers, cafe and cinema which will significantly improve the amenity and comfort of residents.
- The Proposed Development utilises land which is currently available for development, thereby achieving the efficient and optimum use of available land.
- The Proposed Development will potentially employ a number of local subcontractors during the construction phase and, once operational, the development is expected to provide approximately £20m of investment into the local economy and employ around 100 skilled nurses and care workers.

### **Structure of this Report**

1.5 This Planning Statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2 outlines the context of the application and the Application Site;
- Section 3 provides an overview of the discussions held with the LPA and local stakeholders;
- Section 4 describes the proposed development in detail;
- Section 5 identifies the relevant aspects of the Development Plan;
- Section 6 provides an assessment of the Proposed Development; and
- Section 7 outlines our conclusions.

## **Supporting Documents**

- 1.6 List This Application is supported by the following documents and drawings:
- Planning Application Forms and Ownership Certificates;
  - Site Location Plan;
  - Existing and Proposed Plans, Elevations and Sections;
  - Statement of Community Involvement
  - Planning Statement;
  - Design and Access Statement;
  - Landscaping Proposals and Landscape Management Plan
  - Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Method Statement;
  - Ecological Preliminary Impact Assessment;
  - Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment;
  - Drainage Strategy;
  - Noise Assessment;
  - Air Quality Assessment;
  - Daylight and Sunlight Assessment;
  - Transport Assessment;
  - Travel Plan;
  - Ground Condition Assessment; and
  - Sustainability, Energy Statement and Site Waste Management Plan.
- 1.7 Read together, the documents provide a comprehensive overview of the Applicant's scheme, demonstrating its acceptability in planning and technical terms.

## 2.0 CONTEXT OF THE APPLICATION

2.1 This Section provides an overview of the Applicant, their requirements for new development and the rationale for choosing the Application Site. It is then followed by a description of the Site and the surrounding area.

### Existing Taylor & Taylor provision

2.2 This application is brought forward by Mercian Developments (“the Applicant”) on behalf of care home operators Taylor & Taylor (“the Operator”).

2.3 The Operator currently maintains two residential care homes within the local area. These comprise the Julie Richardson Nursing Home, located at 12-14 Dashwood Road, and the Banbury Heights Nursery Home, at 11 Old Parr Road. Table 1 confirms the existing capacity of the two facilities:

Facility	Capacity
Julie Richardson Nursing Home	40
Banbury Heights Nursing Home	59
Total capacity	99

Table 1: Existing Taylor & Taylor Facilities

2.4 As demonstrated by Figure 1, the two facilities are located in close proximity to each other (at approximately 200m apart), and 2.3km from the Application Site:

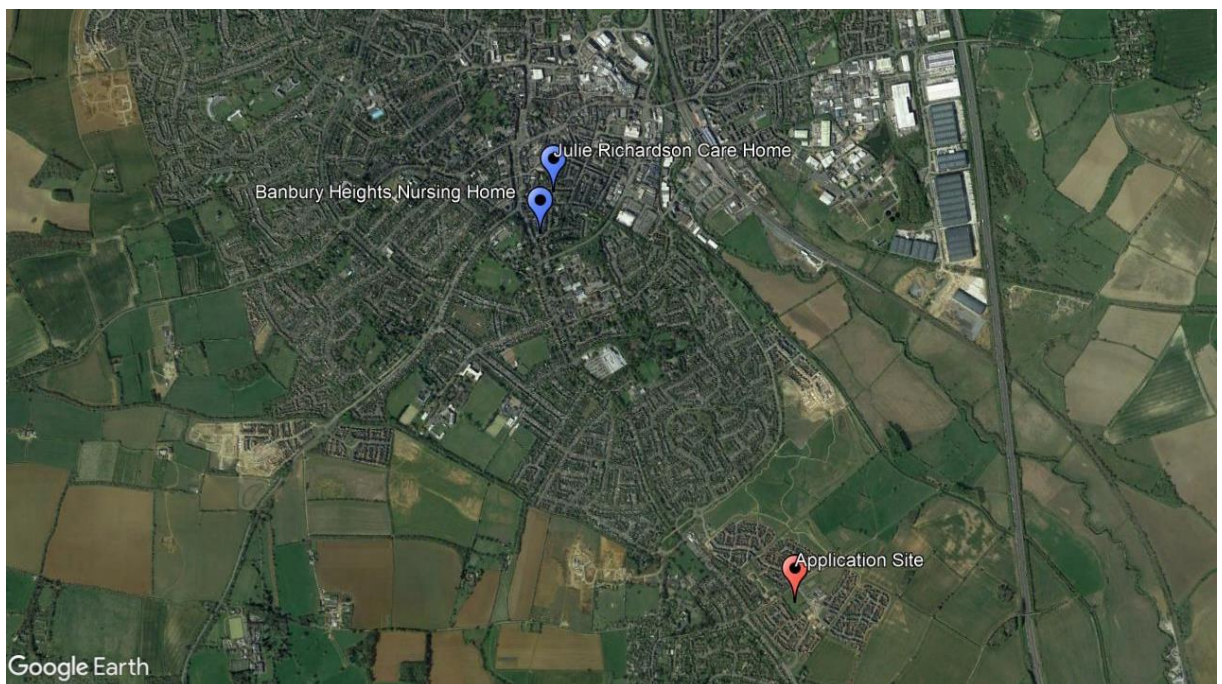


Figure 1: Existing and Proposed Site Locations

2.5 The two facilities are both operated by Taylor & Taylor, but provide different services. The Julie Richardson Nursing Home provides specialist dementia care, whereas the Banbury Heights provides an intermediary form of care, through a service known as “Discharge to Assess”. It accommodates elderly people who have been hospitalised recently, to allow them to recover in a more comfortable setting, and to assess whether they can return to independent living, or whether any longer-term care will be required. Banbury Heights is one of only six facilities in the UK which provides this service, and the only facility in the District.



- 2.6 Both homes are subject to a constant review and, where possible, are upgraded to meet changing standards. Both homes have been in operation for many years and it is becoming increasingly apparent that refurbishment alone will not deliver the higher standard of care both homes are striving for. One major flaw, for example, is that only 60% of the existing rooms include ensuite WCs and only a very small number include showers. Whilst it is not the main driver for this development, lessons must also be learnt from the COVID-19 pandemic, to provide adaptable circulation spaces and living quarters which will be better facilitate social distancing and isolation where necessary.
- 2.7 It is hoped that, by relocating both care homes into one, purpose-built facility, the best quality of care can be assured and maintained in a more sustainable manner. All existing staff would transfer as part of the relocation process.

#### **Need for additional accommodation**

- 2.8 In addition to general improvements to the standard of existing accommodation, there is a forecasted need to provide an 30% increase in capacity to accommodate the significant increase expected to take place within the upper age brackets of the local population. Further commentary on this point is provided within the appraisal section of this Planning Statement. The total anticipated requirement (within Taylor & Taylor's operations) is expected to increase to around 128 bedspaces to serve the towns of Banbury and Bodicote.

#### **Site and surroundings**

- 2.9 The Application relates to a vacant 0.97 hectare plot of land within a larger urban extension known collectively as the 'Longford Park' development, situated at the eastern end of Bodicote and to the south of Banbury. Outline planning permission for the wider development was first granted in 2009 (LPA Ref: 05/01337/OUT) and allowed the development of up to 1,070 dwellings. The development will include associated facilities including the newly built Longford Park Primary School and a new village centre which has yet to be built.
- 2.10 Figure 2 sets out the extent of the Application Site in red, below:



Figure 2: Site Location Plan

- 2.11 The scale and appearance within the Longford Park development is subject to a Design Code and Masterplan which was approved in 2010 (LPA Ref: 10/00294/DISC) and has been used to inform the proposed development.
- 2.12 As can be seen in Figure 2, much of the residential development approved through the 2005 permission (and other, associated permissions) have been built. The Application Site, and two adjacent parcels of land to the south-east (focused around the communal car parking area) remain vacant. These two parcels of land are intended to form the 'village centre' and benefit from planning permission to provide a terrace of 2-3 storey buildings (LPA Ref: 14/01888/F), which will provide a range of goods and services.
- 2.13 According to the Design Code, the Application Site formed part of a wider area of land 'Parcel A', which was intended to provide housing through a series of 2-3 storey terraces. Whilst housing has been developed on the remainder of the development Parcel, no such development has taken place on the Application Site, nor are there any detailed planning permissions for such development in place.
- 2.14 Against this background, the Application Site represents a vacant and available parcel of land, in which the principle of some form of development has been established.



### **3.0 PRE-APPLICATION ADVICE AND CONSULTATION**

3.1 This section outlines the discussions and consultations that have taken place prior to the submission of this application.

#### **Pre-Application Discussions with the Council**

3.2 Following an initial planning and design appraisal for the Site, the Applicant sought formal pre-application advice from the Council in February 2022. The advice received can be summarised as follows:

- The Cherwell Local Plan does not allocate land for care home facilities and other uses falling within Use Class C2. As such there is no preferred location for C2 use and the presumption in favour of sustainable development (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy PSD1 of the Local Plan). More on this point is set out within the Planning Policy and Assessment set out at Sections 5 and 6 of this Planning Statement.
- No objection is raised to the principle of built development in this location.
- The principle of a C2 land use in this location is considered appropriate and broadly compatible with the surrounding area, subject to detailed design and an assessment of potential amenity impacts upon the surrounding area.
- The design should reflect the character of the local area, which features a relatively modern design language which integrates traditional features such as gable projects, hipped and gable roof forms.
- Officers agreed that the design of larger buildings should aim to reduce the perceived size of any structures by introducing a variety of built forms and materials and should aim to achieve a transition between the village centre and the residential character of the surrounding area.
- Any application should be supported by a full assessment of technical matters, including drainage and the risk of flooding, the potential for ground contamination being present on the Site, the ecological potential of the Site, and any highway and transport-related impacts which may be associated with the proposed use.

3.3 The above advice has been taken on board and incorporated into the development proposals, where possible.

#### **Pre-Application Consultation with Stakeholders**

3.4 Prior to submitting this application the Applicant has also sought the views of local residents. Details of this consultation exercise is set out within the Statement of Community Involvement prepared by Townhouse Communications.

3.5 This confirms that Local Residents were consulted via a website ([www.longfordparkcarehome.co.uk](http://www.longfordparkcarehome.co.uk)) and press release made on 31 October 2022. A two-week consultation period was held between 1-14 November 2022.

3.6 The remainder of this Planning Assessment provides a full overview of the development and the ways in which its design aims to minimise any potential impact to local residents.

- 3.7 Overall we consider that the Proposed Development has been designed having regard to the amenity of local residents. Further consideration towards potential amenity impacts is set out within the Planning Assessment provided at Section 6.0 of this Planning Statement.

## **4.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

- 4.1 This Section describes the proposed development in detail and should be read in conjunction with the Design and Access Statement prepared by KWL Architects.
- 4.2 The proposed care home for older people will provide 128 beds across a part two, part three storey building laid out in flexible wings, specifically designed to deliver the highest standards and communal spaces for residents.
- 4.3 The proposed main entrance into the care home is easily identified and located off a dedicated car parking area providing 44 car parking spaces (including 2 disabled spaces, 1 delivery bay and 1 ambulance bay) together with 20 cycle parking spaces.
- 4.4 All entrances and exits will be designed to have level thresholds increasing ease of use.
- 4.5 Within the Site all areas are easily identified with appropriate signage and private areas secured by keypad access.
- 4.6 All bedrooms will be equipped with en-suite bathrooms designed for safety and accessibility, including shared facilities such as a café and cinema. Additional facilities include assisted bathrooms, communal lounges, dining rooms and flexible day rooms on both floors. A staff lounge and changing facility will also be provided.
- 4.7 The external areas will feature detailed landscaped gardens which will include raised planters and fully accessible footpaths.

## 5.0 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES AND GUIDANCE

5.1 This Section identifies the relevant planning policies and guidance at a national and development plan level. The proposals are then assessed against these policies in Section 6 which follows.

### **Statutory Development Plan**

5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that, where an adopted development plan contains relevant policies, an application for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.3 The Development Plan applicable to the Site comprises:

- Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, or LPP1 Partial Review (September 2020);
- Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, or LPP1 (December 2016); and the
- Saved Policies of the Cherwell Local Plan (SPCLP, 1996).

### Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, or LPP1 Partial Review (LPP1, September 2020)

5.4 The Partial Review was carried out specifically to identify additional development land needed to provide the district's share of the unmet housing needs within the neighbouring Oxford City Council administrative area.

5.5 Policy PR1 aims to achieve sustainable forms of developments which will meet Oxford's needs. This policy forms a key consideration in the spatial strategy for Cherwell, as it recognises that there is a pressing need to deliver new homes which will in part help to meet of Oxford, and confirms that the District will accommodate additional growth where it does not cause harm to the delivery of the Cherwell Local Plan (2015). As such, the housing needs of Oxford may form a material planning consideration when assessing any proposals for residential development within the district.

5.6 Policy PR2 suggests that only the need for self-contained dwellings (Use Class C3) will be accommodated within the district. As such, the LPP1 Partial Review is of limited relevance to this development proposal.

### Cherwell Local Plan Part 1, or LPP1 (December 2016)

5.7 Policy BSC3 relates to affordable housing and explains that developments within Bodicote (defined within the policy as an "elsewhere" location) will be expected to provide at least 35% of new housing as affordable homes on site.

5.8 Policy BSC4 aims to deliver a mix of new residential development which will meet both current and anticipated future demand. It confirms that opportunities for the provision of extra care, specialist housing for older and/or disabled people and those with mental health needs and other supported housing for those with specific living needs will be encouraged in suitable locations close to services and facilities. It explains that all proposals will be expected to provide affordable housing in accordance with Policy BSC3.

5.9 Policy ESD1 aims to adapt to, and mitigate against, the impacts of climate change. It explains that new development should be directed towards the most sustainable locations so that they may reduce the need to travel and may encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport. New development should also aim to reduce carbon emissions and use resources more efficiently in line with Policy ESD3. It states that new development proposals should consider the possibility of providing passive solar design for heating and cooling, sustainable forms of drainage, and the provision of green infrastructure. Reference is also made to the Sustainable Buildings in Cherwell SPD.

- 5.10 Policy ESD 2 explains that, in order to achieve the reduction of carbon emissions, new development should have regard to the energy strategy which aims to reduce energy use and make use of renewable sources of energy.
- 5.11 Policy ESD 3 aims to encourage sustainable forms of constructions. For non-residential forms of development (which in this case, would include C2 use), new development will be expected to achieve BREEAM 'Very Good' standard.
- 5.12 Policy ESD6 states that new development proposals on sites of 1 hectare or more of land within Flood Risk Zone 1 must be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment. Development should be safe and remain operational (where necessary) and proposals should demonstrate that surface water will be managed effectively on site and that the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere, including sewer flooding
- 5.13 Policy ESD 7 encourages the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- 5.14 Policy ESD10 aims to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the natural environment, encouraging a net gain in biodiversity, the reuse of existing soils, the protection of existing trees where possible.
- 5.15 Policy ESD15 states that new development should complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high quality design. The policy sets out a series of design requirements, which includes consideration towards the amenity of neighbouring land uses. The design of all new development will need to be informed by an analysis of the context, together with an explanation and justification of the principles that have informed the design rationale. This should be demonstrated in the Design and Access Statement that accompanies the planning application.

Saved Policies of the Cherwell Local Plan (SPCLP, 1996)

- 5.16 Saved Policy C28 aims to ensure that the layout, design and external appearance of new development is sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context of the site.
- 5.17 Saved Policy C30 states that new housing development should be compatible with the appearance, character, layout, scale and density of existing dwellings within the vicinity of the application site, having regard to residential amenity.
- 5.18 Saved Policy TR1 requires that, before development proposals are permitted the Council will need to be satisfied that any potential impacts are mitigated against through the provision of highway improvement works and traffic management measures.
- 5.19 Saved Policy TR2 aims to minimise the level of conflict between vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5.20 Saved Policy TR3 requires traffic impact assessments to be provided for all major development proposals.
- 5.21 Saved Policy TR5 requires new development to provide the necessary on-site access, turning and servicing provision.

**Material Planning Considerations**

- 5.22 The following may be given weight as material planning considerations:
  - The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, July 2021);
  - The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, March 2014 and periodical updates);
  - The Emerging Development Plan; and
  - Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Guidance notes (SPGs).

## **National Planning Policy Framework**

- 5.23 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. It outlines how the Government expects the planning system to promote and stimulate economic growth. The sections identified below are considered most relevant to this application.
- 5.24 Paragraph 7 explains that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.25 Paragraph 10 explains that, at the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is defined at Paragraph 11, which explains that development proposals which accord with an up-to-date development plan should be approved, without delay. It also explains that, where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, planning permission should be granted. Unless the application of policies within the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing development, or where any adverse impacts of approving an application would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF as a whole.
- 5.26 Paragraph 39 explains that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. It states that good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.
- 5.27 Paragraph 60 explains that the Government's objective is to significantly boost the supply of homes, and to ensure that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed.

## **Planning Practice Guidance**

- 5.28 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) is a web-based resource first published in March 2014 by the [then] Department for Communities and Local Government [now the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities] and is updated periodically. The PPG provides detailed guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the of the NPPF and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. In relation to housing for older people the up-to-date guidance in the PPG (Paragraph 001 Reference ID: 63-001-20190626) advises that:

*"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. In mid-2016 there were 1.6 million people aged 85 and over; by mid-2041 this is projected to double to 3.2 million. 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. Therefore, an understanding of how the ageing population affects housing needs is something to be considered from the early stages of plan-making through to decision-taking."*

- 5.29 All aspects of the adopted Development Plan, and material planning considerations, are taken into account in the Planning Assessment set out in the following section.

## **Emerging Development Plan**

### Cherwell Local Plan 2040

- 5.30 The Council is currently working on a review of the current Local Plan, through a new document which is referred to as the Cherwell Local Plan 2040. At the time of writing the plan remains in draft form, having most recently consulted on a series of issues and options between September and November 2021. As the draft plan has not yet progressed to Regulation 19 stage and no detailed policies drafted, only limited weight may be applied to the draft plan at this time.

### Oxfordshire Plan 2050

- 5.31 In March 2017, the Government committed to the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal to support plans to deliver 100,000 homes by 2031. The deal committed to an Oxfordshire-wide joint statutory spatial plan to be adopted by 2021 (the "Oxfordshire Plan 2050").
- 5.32 Recently in August 2022, it was announced that the five Local Planning authorities in Oxfordshire which had been working together on the joint plan were unable to reach agreement on the approach to planning for future housing needs within the framework of the Oxfordshire Plan. Work on the plan is understood to have stopped entirely, and planning applications are to continue to be determined at a City and District level. As such, no weight is afforded to the now abandoned draft plan.

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) and Documents (SPDs)**

### Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document SPD

- 5.33 The Developer Contributions SPD sets out the Council's approach to seeking S106 planning obligations in the absence of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule within the District.



## **6.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

6.1 This section of the Planning Statement provides an assessment of the Proposed Development against the provisions of the Development Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **Need for New Development**

6.2 Policy BSC4 aims to deliver a mix of new residential development which will meet both current and anticipated future demand.

6.3 In aiming to meet current demand, the Proposed Development aims to avoid any net-loss in the number of C2 bedspaces. A review of existing premises has determined that the current facilities at both the Julie Richardson and Banbury Heights nursing homes are reaching the end of their usable life. An assessment of refurbishment options has determined that it is not feasible, practical or suitable to upgrade the existing facilities. Therefore, unless action is taken, the closure of these facilities would lead to a net loss of 99 C2 bedspaces.

6.4 The assessment also notes that the population of the UK is set to age dramatically over the coming years, with a substantial increase in the number of people living over the age of 85, when the likely dependence upon some form of care increases dramatically. The Oxfordshire Council - Growth Needs Assessment was published in July 2021 and sets out the anticipated population changes across the (now abandoned) JSSP. This document notes a 19% increase in the population of pensionable age individuals (aged 65 and over) between the period of 2011-2018 (Table 3.3.3) and anticipates a 60% increase between the period of 2018-2043 (Table 3.9.2), amounting to around 60,000 people. This increase is expected to be particularly acute amongst the ages of 75-79 (+75%), 80-84 (+85%), and those aged 85 and over (an increase of 117%).

6.5 It has therefore been determined that the provision of a further 29 bedspaces is considered to make an appropriate allowance for future demand. Accordingly, the provision of 128 new bedspaces is considered to be appropriate and consistent with the aims of Policy BSC4.

### **Principle of development in this location**

6.6 Policy BSC2 aims to ensure that land is used effectively and efficiently. Whilst it is noted that the land may currently appear as an area of open and greenfield land, the principle of some form of development in this location has been established since the grant of outline planning permission for the Longford Park development in 2009 (05/01337/OUT). Given that the land is already committed to some form of development, the development of the Application Site should be regarded as an efficient use of land which is compliant with Policy BSC2.

### **Ground Conditions**

6.7 The potential for ground contamination has been assessed via a Phase 1 Desk Study Report produced by JPP. The report notes that the Site has historically been used for allotments and agricultural purposes and that these uses, together with temporary use as a trackway (in relation to the wider residential development) could present some risk of contamination being present. The report also notes that the underlying Marlstone Rock could be a source of radon contamination. Accordingly the report recommends that a Phase 2 Ground Investigation be carried out to quantify the potential sources of contamination, the risks presented and the mitigation measures required to enable development.

6.8 It should be noted that the potential presence of contamination within the ground does not in itself set a presumption against development at the planning stage. Development may proceed where appropriate mitigation and / or remediation has taken place.

### **Design and Landscaping**

- 6.9 Policy ESD15 requires new development to complement and enhance the character of its context through sensitive siting, layout and high-quality design.
- 6.10 The design of the Proposed Development has been influenced by the size and shape of the available development plot and the context of the surrounding area as a recent housing development ("Longford Park"). Section 2.0 of this report explains that the much of the Longford Park Development has been influenced by a Design Code which was approved in 2010 (LPA Ref: 10/00294/DISC). The Design Code suggests that:
- Longford Park Road, which forms the main frontage of the Site, will be a principal road acting as the main vehicular route across the wider development.
  - Canal Lane, the public right of way to the north of the Site, will act as a key route for pedestrians and cyclists.
  - The adjacent area, to the south-east of the Site, will act as a key civic space and local retail centre for the development.
  - The Longford Park Road frontage of the Site will form part of the Village Centre Frontage, where development will be expected to feature a continuous, terraced frontage comprising a variety of building heights, reaching a maximum of 3 storeys (14.2m to ridge height).
  - The Longford Park Road frontage of the site should feature soft landscaping, either through the retention of the existing hedgerow, or through the provision of a formal tree planting design to include Acer Platanoides 'Emerald Queen'.
  - The design of any built development should use a varied pallet of brick, render and roofing types, as specified within the Design Code, to add visual interest.
- 6.11 The above information was used to create an initial brief for development and was further informed by the pre-application advice sought from the Council, as outlined in Section 3.0 of this Planning Statement. Officers added that the design should reflect the character of the local area, which features a relatively modern design language which integrates traditional features such as gable projects, hipped and gable roof forms.
- 6.12 A full explanation as to how the design of the Proposed Development responds to the local context is outlined and illustrated within the Design and Access Statement, produced by KWL Architects. Following the Council's pre-application advice, the overall scale of the building was reduced from 148 to 128 bedspaces (-13%) to ensure that the overall scale and massing (including the use of a hipped roof) integrates well with the surrounding built environment.
- 6.13 The resulting design is one which respects the character of the current build development in the area and acknowledges its future role in leading up to the new 'Village Centre', which comprise new commercial development to the south of the Application Site, and centred around the car parking area with development fronting Longford Park Road and Songthrush Road. Accordingly, the commercial character and terraced design of the Proposed Development is considered to be consistent with the requirements of Policy ESD15 and the Design Code.
- 6.14 The palette of materials has been selected to reflect those recommended by the Design Code and used throughout the Estate. These will feature a combination of red brick with matching mortar, and soft cream render and window detailing comprising reconstituted stone. The varied use of these materials, together with two distinctive glazed circulation cores, will be used to differentiate different parts of the building, and to emphasise the central entrance area. The resulting design is therefore considered to respect and enhance local character, and deliver a legible design which can be easily navigated.

6.15 The overall brief for the design has sought to ensure that the Proposed Development can be accommodated within the Application Site comfortably and that it will integrate well with the surrounding area. The following sections of this Planning Statement will assess any potential impacts arising from the Proposed Development, and further demonstrate compliance with Policy ESD15.

### **Amenity**

6.16 The Proposed Development has been positioned centrally within the development plot and designed in a distinctive 'H' shape, which is intended to focus the majority of activity within the centre of the Site and minimise any potential impacts.

6.17 This section considers the potential amenity impacts the development may have in line with Policy ESD15, both in respect of existing residents in the surrounding area, and in respect of future occupants of the development.

### Outlook, Privacy and Overlooking

6.18 The proposed layout of the site aims to ensure a good quality of outlook and privacy, both for guests of the proposed care home(s) and any residents in the surrounding development. The existing and well-established landscaping along the north, east and south boundaries of the site provide a good degree of visual separation between the site and the surrounding area.

6.19 Section 6.7 of the Cherwell Design Guide provides advice regarding the separation distances between residential properties. The Proposed Development meets these requirements as follows:

- The minimum separation distance of 22 metres back-to-back is achieved and is generally in excess of this.
- The minimum separation distance of 14 metres between any rear and side elevation is achieved and is generally in excess of this.
- All habitable windows at first floor level are positioned at least 7m from the boundary of any neighbouring property and are generally in excess of this.

6.20 Accordingly, we believe the proposed development respects the amenity of both existing residents and future occupants and is therefore compliant with Policy ESD15.

### Daylight, Sunlight and Overshadowing

6.21 In addition to maintaining a reasonable degree of physical separation, the overall layout and massing of the development has been assessed to ensure that there are no adverse impacts upon the levels of daylight, sunlight and shadows reaching neighbouring properties. Accordingly an assessment has been prepared by Behan Chartered Surveyors and is submitted in support of this application.

6.22 Subject to the detailed modelling and technical calculations set out within the document, the report concludes that all habitable windows within neighbouring properties will continue to be adequately lit. All habitable windows pass the relevant tests and no adverse impacts are anticipated.

6.23 Accordingly, the siting, scale and massing of the development maintains the amenity and levels of light receivable at neighbouring properties, demonstrating further compliance with Policy ESD15

### Noise and Vibration.

- 6.24 As a predominantly commercial operation, with plant serving a large number of bedrooms and living spaces, as well as centralised kitchen and utility equipment, it is recognised that the design of any associated plant should be carefully designed to avoid any impact upon the amenity of future occupants and any neighbouring residents.
- 6.25 To assess any potential impacts and to inform the overall design, a Noise Impact Assessment has been prepared by Hepworth Acoustics and is submitted in support of this application. The report notes that no special acoustic mitigation is required to control the noise likely to be generated by such equipment, and subject to the continued implementation of good acoustic design through the construction and operational phases, any impact can be avoided.

### Air Quality

- 6.26 Similarly, it is recognised that the construction and operational phases of development could impact air quality in the surrounding area. To assess this, an Air Quality Assessment has been prepared by Syntegra and is submitted in support of this application. The report concludes that:
- Construction Phase: Assuming good practice dust control measures are implemented, the residual significance of potential air quality impacts from dust generated by demolition, Earthworks construction and trackout was predicted to be not significant
  - Operational Phase: Due to the size and nature of the proposals, road vehicle exhaust emissions impacts were predicted to be not significant. Model results also indicate that future users are unlikely to be exposed to pollutant concentrations that exceed AQOs
- 6.27 Overall it can be concluded that any risk has been properly identified, considered avoided and or mitigated against, and the Proposed Development is deemed to be compliant with Policy ESD10 and ESD15.

### **Access and Transport**

- 6.28 Saved Policies TR1, TR2, TR3 and TR5 all require new development to assess, identify and mitigate against any potential highway impacts by providing any necessary site access, parking and servicing areas, and by providing any off-site improvement works which may be deemed to be necessary. Accordingly, a Transport Assessment (TA) has been produced by Connect Consultants and is submitted in support of the application, together with a Travel Plan (TP).
- 6.29 In assessing potential traffic movements the TA notes the potential to prioritise sustainable modes of transport. It notes that there is a good quality of pedestrian footway infrastructure in the local area, and that Regional Cycle Route 5 runs to the west of the Application Site, running along Oxford Road and helps to support the promotion of walking and cycling as the first means of transport in the local area. The TA also notes that a bus service runs past the site and stops immediately adjacent the site frontage, and additional bus services are available from the A4260, 450m to the west of the Site. Overall, the TA concludes that there is a good level of accessibility via sustainable modes of transport.
- 6.30 Suitable access to the Site is provided. The TA notes that access to the Site will be provided via the existing priority T-junction. The TA confirms that the access is capable of accommodating the number and type of traffic movements into and out of the Site in a safe and efficient manner.
- 6.31 The Site can be adequately serviced. The TA assesses the suitability of the Site to be serviced by larger vehicles, confirming that they can access, manoeuvre and park within the Site with no safety issues.

- 6.32 Sufficient car and cycle parking can be provided on Site. The TA notes that, whilst there are no published parking standards for the proposed use, discussions have taken place between Connect Consultants and the relevant authority, Oxfordshire County Council. The provision of 38 standard car parking spaces, 2 disabled spaces, 1 temporary loading/servicing bay, and 1 ambulance bay, together with 10 cycle parking spaces, will ensure that the Site can accommodate all anticipated demands for vehicle parking on-site.
- 6.33 Taking the above into account, the potential impacts of the development on the wider highway network have been assessed in detail. The TA concludes that a very modest number of trips will be generated by the proposed development and that it would not result in an unacceptable impact, even during the morning and afternoon peaks in demand.
- 6.34 The TA demonstrates that the proposed development is capable of accommodating all anticipated forms of trip generation and traffic. Notwithstanding this a Travel Plan has been prepared with the aim of encouraging staff and visitors to utilise sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) wherever possible.
- 6.35 Based on these assessments, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development is compliant with Saved Policies TR1, TR2, TR3 and TR5.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

- 6.36 Policy ESD6 requires new development to have regard to the potential for flooding. The Application Site is located within Flood Risk Zone 1, where there is deemed to be a low risk of flooding and no presumption against new development. Under these circumstances smaller sites of less than 1 hectare (such as the Application Site) are not required to provide a Flood Risk Assessment. The drainage strategy (outlined below) ensures that surface and foul water can be drained in a sustainable manner without increasing the risk of flooding on-site or elsewhere.
- 6.37 Policy ESD7 encourages the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The potential design of the drainage system has been assessed via the Drainage Strategy produced by JPP. It confirms that desk based research and on-site tests have been carried out to identify the most suitable and sustainable means of drainage on-site.
- 6.38 The proposed surface water strategy will comprise a piped network with attenuation provided in buried geocellular storage, with an outfall to the adjacent sewer network via the existing spur provided, and restricted to the minimum viable discharge rate of 2.5 l/s. Tanked permeable paving will be used for the car for interception purposes and to provide a level of surface water treatment. Further, two swales will be provided for the conveyance of surface water and to provide a level of surface water treatment. A total volume of 400 m<sup>3</sup> of attenuation will be provided, sufficient to accommodate storms up to and including the 1 in 100 + 40% climate change event.
- 6.39 Foul water will outfall to the adjacent foul water network associated with the surrounding network. A connection will be made off Longford Park Road, via the existing spur provided for the site.
- 6.40 Utilising this strategy the Proposed Development can be accommodated on-site in accordance with the relevant design standards, and without issue. The development is therefore deemed to be compliant with Policy ESD6 and ESD7.

### **Energy and Sustainability**

- 6.41 Policies ESD1-13 of the Local Plan aim to encourage energy efficient and sustainable forms of development and have been considered from the outset of the design process. The Sustainability and Energy Statement, prepared by Envision, provides details of the

sustainability measures which have been considered and incorporated into the design of the development. The report confirms that the development will:

- ensure the efficient use of land;
- target BREEAM 'Very Good' rating (checked and deemed to be achievable);
- the meet and exceed the target reduction in carbon emissions;
- meet the required surface water runoff and drainage rates;
- incorporate measures to reduce water consumption;
- deliver a net gain in biodiversity (see ecology section, which follows);
- encourage staff and visitors to utilise sustainable modes of transport;

6.42 Based upon this assessment, it can be concluded that the Proposed Development is compliant with all relevant aspects of the development plan.

## **Ecology**

### Preliminary Ecological Appraisal

6.43 Policy ESD10 aims to protect and enhance the biodiversity of the natural environment. To aid in this respect the application is supported by a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) produced by Zebra Ecology.

6.44 The PEA concludes that the Site does not form part of any statutory or non-statutory designated sites and the nature of the development proposed is not considered likely to give rise to any negative impacts upon these assets, providing standard procedures are followed.

6.45 With regard to the potential for Bats, the existing trees within the Site have been assessed to have low potential to support roosting bats and it is considered unlikely that the Site will be used by commuting and foraging bats. No further survey work is deemed to be necessary.

6.46 With regard to the potential for Birds, the report notes that the majority of suitable nesting and foraging habitat will be retained, with only a small section of the boundary hedge (circa 10 metres) to be removed to facilitate access. Subject to appropriate mitigation it is considered unlikely that the proposals will have any negative impacts upon the local bird population.

6.47 Given the nature of the habitats on site and the urban location, it is considered highly unlikely that any other protected and/or notable species will be present on site and/or negatively impacted by the proposals, provided that the works are carried out in a sensitive and precautionary manner.

6.48 Overall, the Proposed Development is not considered to give rise to any significant and adverse impacts upon the biodiversity potential of the Site.

### Biodiversity Net Gain

6.49 In addition to avoiding any adverse impact, the Proposed Development also aims to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. In addition to the requirements of Policy ESD10 to 'enhance' site biodiversity, the aim of the new Environment Act 2021 (to quantify and demonstrate a 10% net gain) also form a material consideration.

6.50 In assessing Biodiversity Net Gain it should be noted that, at the time of writing (November 2022) a number of components within the Act have no legal effect as they are reliant upon the introduction of secondary legislation. The 'requirement' to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain has not yet come into full force and therefore the 10% requirement cannot be strictly enforced. Under these circumstances any net gain in biodiversity should be supported and, unless it can be demonstrated that there is a net loss in biodiversity, any shortfall in BNG (ie >0% but <10%) should not constitute a reason to refuse planning permission.

- 6.51 To quantify and assess the biodiversity impacts of the proposed development, a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan has been prepared by Zebra Ecology and submitted in support of the application. The report demonstrates that the proposed development is capable of both meeting and exceeding the 10% target, highlighting an expected 13.91% increase in habitat units and a 20.23% increase in hedgerow units.
- 6.52 When taken as a whole, the Proposed Development is expected to protect and enhance the ecological potential of the Site in line with Policy ESD10.

#### **Arboriculture**

- 6.53 Policy ESD10 advocates the protection of existing trees. The Application Site includes a number of existing trees and established hedgerows. To assess the potential impact, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment has been prepared by Zebra Trees and is submitted in support of this planning application.
- 6.54 A survey carried out on 10 August 2020 noted four individual trees and seven groupings of trees on the Site. To accommodate the Proposed Development, there will be a need to remove a total of five trees, including 1x Category B, 2x Category C and 2 Category U trees. None of the trees assessed are considered to be worthy of protection as a high quality, aged or veteran tree, and replacement tree planting will ensure that there is no net loss. The proposed development is therefore considered to be compliant with Policy ESD10.

#### **Further considerations**

- 6.55 Upon submission of this Planning Applications the Applicant will actively work with the Local Planning Authority to provide any additional information or detail reasonably required to assess the proposals. Where such information cannot be reasonably provided at the application stage, the Applicant would consider the use of reasonably worded planning conditions to secure such additional information subject to key development milestones, the precise triggers for which should be discussed and agreed in advance in line with Paragraphs 55-58 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).



## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of an application for full planning permission, seeking permission for:

***Erection of new 128-bed residential care home (Use Class C2) together with associated access, parking and landscaping.***

7.2 This Planning Statement has demonstrated compliance with all relevant aspects of the development plan.

7.3 In line with the Government's objectives for securing sustainable development, as set out within the NPPF, this Planning Statement has demonstrated that the Proposed Development will deliver the following public benefits:

- The Proposed Development delivers a net gain in the number of C2 bedspaces, ensuring that there is no net loss of existing bedspaces, and makes a reasonable allowance for future population growth.
- The Proposed Development will provide a series of new, purpose built C2 bedspaces will be designed to meet modern-day standards and best practices, which will help staff to better meet the needs of residents.
- The Proposed Development includes a series of ancillary facilities, including a hairdressers, cafe and cinema which will significantly improve the amenity and comfort of residents.
- The Proposed Development utilises land which is currently available for development, thereby achieving the efficient and optimum use of brownfield land.
- The Proposed Development will potentially employ a number of local subcontractors during the construction phase and, once operational, the development is expected to provide approximately £20m of investment into the local economy and employ around 100 skilled nurses and care workers.

7.4 Having regard to the numerous public benefits associated with the proposed development, and the absence of any significant and residual adverse impacts upon the surrounding area, the proposals are compliant with all relevant aspects of the Development Plan and constitute a sustainable form of development which should be granted planning permission in accordance with the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).