



Planning Application

The Willows Care Centre, 2 Hexham Road, Reading RG2 7UG

Siting of Temporary Single Storey Modular Building

PLANNING STATEMENT



View of The Willows Care Centre from Hexham Road

1.0 Introduction

This Statement has been prepared by Corporate Property Services on behalf of the Director of Adult Care and Health Services for planning permission to be extended for the siting of a temporary single storey Modular Building at The Willows Centre, Hexham Road, Reading.

2.0 Information about the property

The Willows Care Centre (formally known as Tanfield) is a council run home providing specialist dementia care for 16 people with dementia and intermediate care for 10 people, some of whom also have dementia. The centre also provides a base for staff that run community rehabilitation schemes providing care in the home.

The home is situated in an urban area of Reading and the residents are from different ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the diversity of the Borough.

The Centre was refurbished during 2011 and now has modernised accommodation including en-suite bathrooms and generous social spaces. Residents were involved in the re-design of the building and good practice in the design for people with dementia was followed to improve the property.

In 2012, the Centre was further enhanced by the installation of Solar Photovoltaic Panels on the roofs facing Bede Walk.

3.0 Relevant Planning History

A search of the Reading Borough Council online planning application pages discloses several records of planning permission being granted for the development site and they are as follows:

Application No. 141498 (17/10/2014): Siting of temporary single storey modular building for a further three years.

Application No.131270 (18/10/2013): Erection of new Conservatory.

Application No.110672 (15/09/2011): Siting of temporary single storey modular building for three years.

Application No.110396 (04/01/2012): Discharge of conditions 2 and 7 of planning permission 11/00313/REG3.

Application No.111371 (22/08/2011): Provide infill to existing balcony with PVCU framework, to match existing windows with solid infill panels. Provide canopy to Hexham road fronting elevation. Complete with ramp and handrails all installed to comply with DDA regulations.

Application No.111576 (27/04/2011): Provision of additional on-site car parking.

Application No.051300 (18/01/2006): Continued siting of temporary single storey modular building for a further 3 years without complying with Condition 1 of planning permission02/01552/REG3.

Application No.020562 (05/02/2003): Erection of temporary (temporary being three years) single storey modular building for use as an office solely ancillary to the existing residential care home for the elderly; and the demolition of three existing garages and dilapidated shed.

There are no details of applications prior to 1988 on the system.

4.0 Site Analysis

The Willows Care Centre is situated off of Northumberland Avenue in Whitley on the southern outskirts of Reading.

The premises consist of two separate buildings and a number of small storage sheds.

The original main block was built in the 1970's and has a gross floor area of 1700 square metres. The main block is a one and two storey building built around a central courtyard. Construction consists of traditional fair face brickwork to elevations, with double glazed UPVC framed windows and timber doors. Roofs are a

combination of concrete tile coverings to pitched roofs and built up felt covered flat roofs. Rainwater goods are of UPVC.

There is also a standalone pre-fabricated single storey Modular Building (the subject of this application) which was installed in the 1990's. It is a typical "Terrapin" type unit with a flat roof, stone chipping clad wall panels and UPVC framed windows. This building is used as office and meeting space accommodation for the Care Centre Staff and has a gross floor area of 63 square metres.

The buildings are set in moderately extensive grounds with gardens and a large car park just off Hexham Road on the Northern boundary of the site.

The site is not within a Conservation Area and none of the surrounding buildings around the site have Listed Status. The only notable feature in the surrounding area is Reading Girls School, which is a large Comprehensive School immediately to the South of the site opposite Bede Walk.

5.0 What is being proposed and why

The purpose of the application is to further extend the planning permission for the siting of a temporary single storey Modular Building for a further 10 years (Previous Application Number 141498).

Although this is not the first time temporary permission has been sought for this building, the applicant is not in a financial position at the present time to replace the building with a more permanent structure due to budget constraints. However, the long-term future of the entire Care Centre is currently under review and any plans would include the replacement of the modular building which is the subject of this application.

Extending the period of planning permission for an additional 10 years will enable the applicant more time to plan and obtain the necessary funds for a permanent extension to the main building.

6.0 Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance

The following planning policies are relevant to this application.

Reading Borough Local Plan:

CUD 14 (Standards of Design in Development)

Reading Borough Core Strategy:

CS7 (Design and the Public Realm)

CS31 (Additional and Existing Community Facilities)

7.0 Description of proposed development

The existing single storey Modular Building forms part of the northern boundary of the communal garden and is attached to the east wing of The Willows Care Centre via a covered walkway. The gross floor area of the building is 63m² (6.0m x 10.5m).

The building is in a good state of repair and continues to provide important additional office floorspace for care staff at this existing community facility site.

There will be no loss of existing facilities or residential units due to the retention of the existing structure.

8.0 Proposed Use

The Modular Building is to continue to function as office accommodation and meeting space for the Care Centre Staff.

9.0 The effect upon visual amenity and the public realm

The development is located on the north facing elevation of the Care Centre and overlooks a car parking area with Hexham Road beyond. It is partially screened from view by a variety of existing mature trees and shrubs growing along the boundary with Hexham Road.

The Modular Building is set back from the front elevation of the Care Centre and is single storey in nature with a low pitched roof that is no higher than the single storey part of the main building.

The proposed development has therefore minimal impact on the main street scene.

10.0 Impact on neighbouring amenity

The development does not overlook any of the neighbouring residential properties and there is unlikely to be an impact in terms of noise and disturbance, loss of outlook or overbearing effects as required by Policy DM4: Safeguarding Amenity.

The existing window in the east facing elevation of the building shall remain glazed with obscure glass in the interests of privacy (to avoid any overlooking of the rear garden area of 8 Hexham Road) in accord with policy CS7 of the Reading Borough Core Strategy (2008).

11.0 Design

The design of the Modular Building is to remain unchanged and no alterations or improvements are proposed.

12.0 Scale & Amount

The Modular Building has a gross floor area of 63m² with overall dimensions of 6.0m wide and 10.5m long. The floor plan is divided into two small offices and one large open plan area and is large enough to accommodate up to 12 people in total.

The scale and massing of the Modular Building is deemed appropriate for the use for which it is intended.

13.0 Layout

Please refer to the attached Block Plan and Floor Plan.

The existing Modular Building is linked via a covered walkway to the east wing of the Main Building which contains other office accommodation, staff toilets and access to the main corridor of the ground floor to the rest of the Care Centre.

14.0 Appearance

There will be no alteration to the external appearance of the Modular Building or the Main Building.

The Modular Building is not prominent in terms of bulk and dominance, particularly when considered against the existing building.

15.0 Landscaping

The existing Landscaping is to be retained and no further improvements or external works are proposed.

16.0 Environmental Sustainability

The Modular Building is designed to be as low maintenance as possible. At the end of its useful life, the majority of the materials used in its construction can be recycled, e.g. upvc, metals, glass, timber, concrete etc.

17.0 Transport

The retention of the Modular Building will not increase the number of residents or staff on the site. In addition, the number of visitors and deliveries to the site will also remain unchanged. Consequently, the frequency of vehicle trips in a normal working day will remain the same as the present.

The existing site already has provision for car parking for visitors with disabilities and there is also sufficient parking for staff and other visitors.

No existing pedestrian or vehicle access points will be affected by the proposal and no additional vehicle parking provision will be required.

Therefore a Transport Impact Assessment is considered to be unnecessary.

18.0 Ecology

The Modular Building is already in situ and so no trees or wildlife will be affected by the proposal. An Ecology survey and an Arboricultural Survey are therefore considered to be unnecessary.

19.0 Archaeology

The Modular Building is already in situ and so there will be no archaeological implications associated with this proposal. An Archaeological survey is therefore considered to be unnecessary.

20.0 Flood Risk

The Environmental Agency website flood risk map indicates that the site is not within a flood prone area and the retention of the Modular Building will not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. A flood risk assessment is therefore considered to be unnecessary.

21.0 Pollution

Measures to reduce traffic, noise and light pollution are not applicable to this particular application.

22.0 Waste and Recycling

There is an existing secure compound on site for the storage of recycling and waste, which is to be retained.

23.0 Accessibility

The Accessibility of the Modular Building and the Main Building will remain unchanged.

24.0 Conclusion

The Modular Building has very little visual impact on the site and the location of the structure is set back from the site boundary and shielded by the adjacent main building and boundary walls.

Although the design and appearance of the building would prevent it from complying with the good design objectives of Policy CS7, the proposal meets the requirements of Policy CS31, which seeks to retain existing functional community facilities that this building provides.

There will be no loss of existing facilities or residential units due to the retention of this building, which will ensure that the staff of the centre can continue to support and care for the residents who live in this important community facility.

25.0 Supporting Documents

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following drawings:

Location Plan	CC/17/001/01	1:1250 @ A3
Block Plan	CC/17/001/02	1:500 @ A3
Floor Plan of Modular Building	CC/17/001/03	1:50 @ A3
Existing Elevations showing Modular Building	CC/17/001/04	1:100 @ A1

26.0 Aerial View of the Site

