

Planning Statement

Florence House Care Home Revised Scheme for Additional Care Units

Westcote Road
Reading



Prepared by

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Submission

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document has been prepared in support of a revised planning application for 8 additional rooms for residents at Florence House Care Home, Westcote Road, Reading. It sets out how previous concerns raised by officers have been overcome. It also demonstrates that the car parking provision (subject to the provision of 8 additional spaces previously approved but not implemented) in addition to the 8 existing spaces for staff and visitors, would adequately provides for staff and visitors without detriment to highway and parking capacity or amenity of existing nearby houses.

2. Background

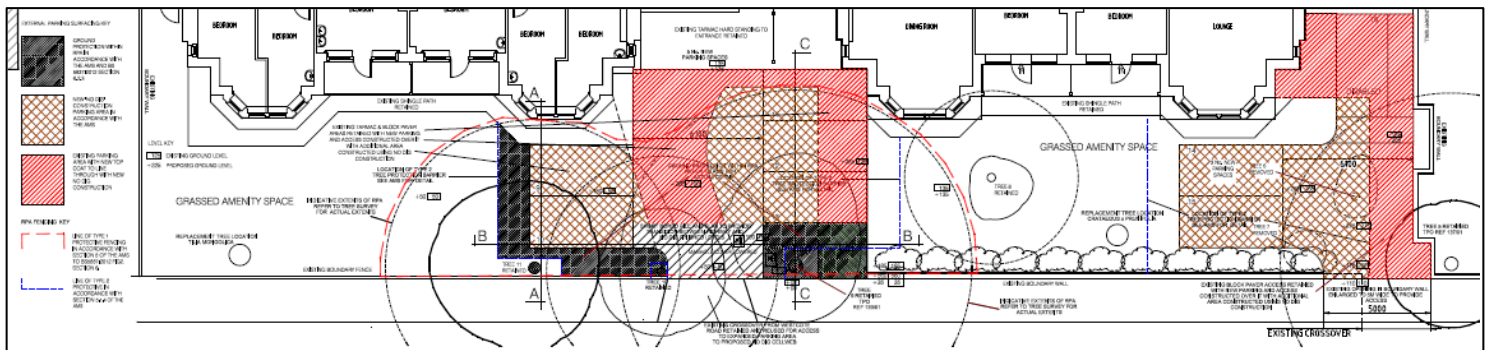
- 2.1 Florence House (originally built in the 1800s). It has been a care home since 2004. It provides the following forms of specialist care:
- Dementia and mental health care for adults;
 - Care for younger people with special/specific needs;
 - Palliative care.
- 2.2 The building is sub-divided into two units: the Nightingale Wing and the Victoria Wing.
- 2.3 The home currently accommodates 83 rooms over three floors.
- 2.4 There are 8 onsite car parking spaces accessed form Maldon Close to the rear of the main building.



2.4 The care home was extended in 2016, following grant of planning permission for two single storey extensions to provide 6 additional rooms Ref: (140369). The approval included the provision of 8 new car parking spaces at the front of the care home, accessed from Westcote Road. The approved layout is illustrated below:



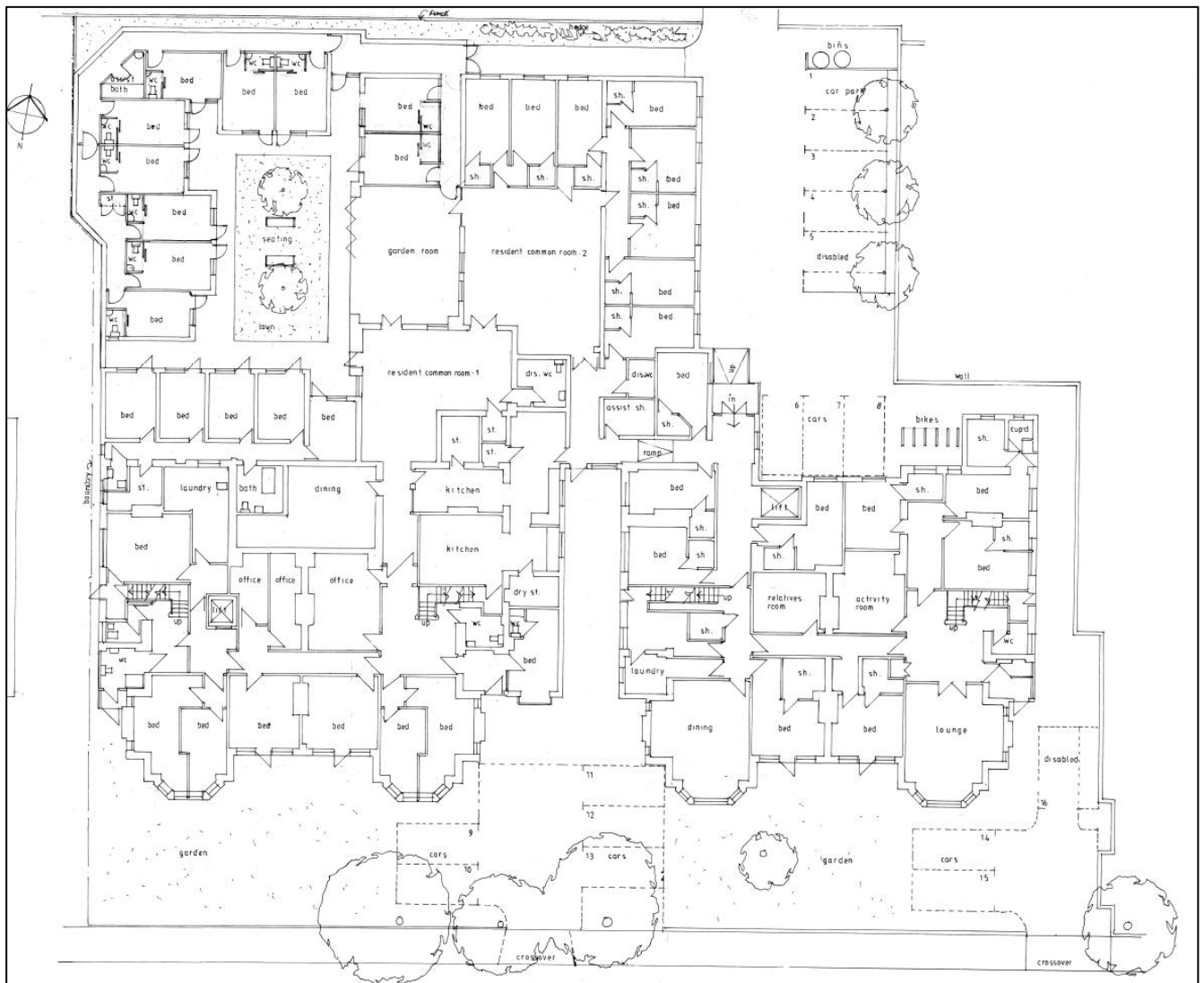
Approved Layout Ref 140369



Approved additional Layout (Ref 140369) not yet implemented

3. Previous Planning Application

3.1 The previous scheme (Ref: 240207) sought permission for a single storey extension to rear to provide 8no. assisted care bedrooms with sensory garden. This application has been withdrawn following concerns raised by planning officers primarily with regards to the loss of amenity space. The proposed layout (Ref:) is shown below :



Withdrawn Layout Ref 240207

3.2 A revised scheme has been devised to overcome the loss of existing amenity space and the creation of new space to serve to new units.

4. Proposals

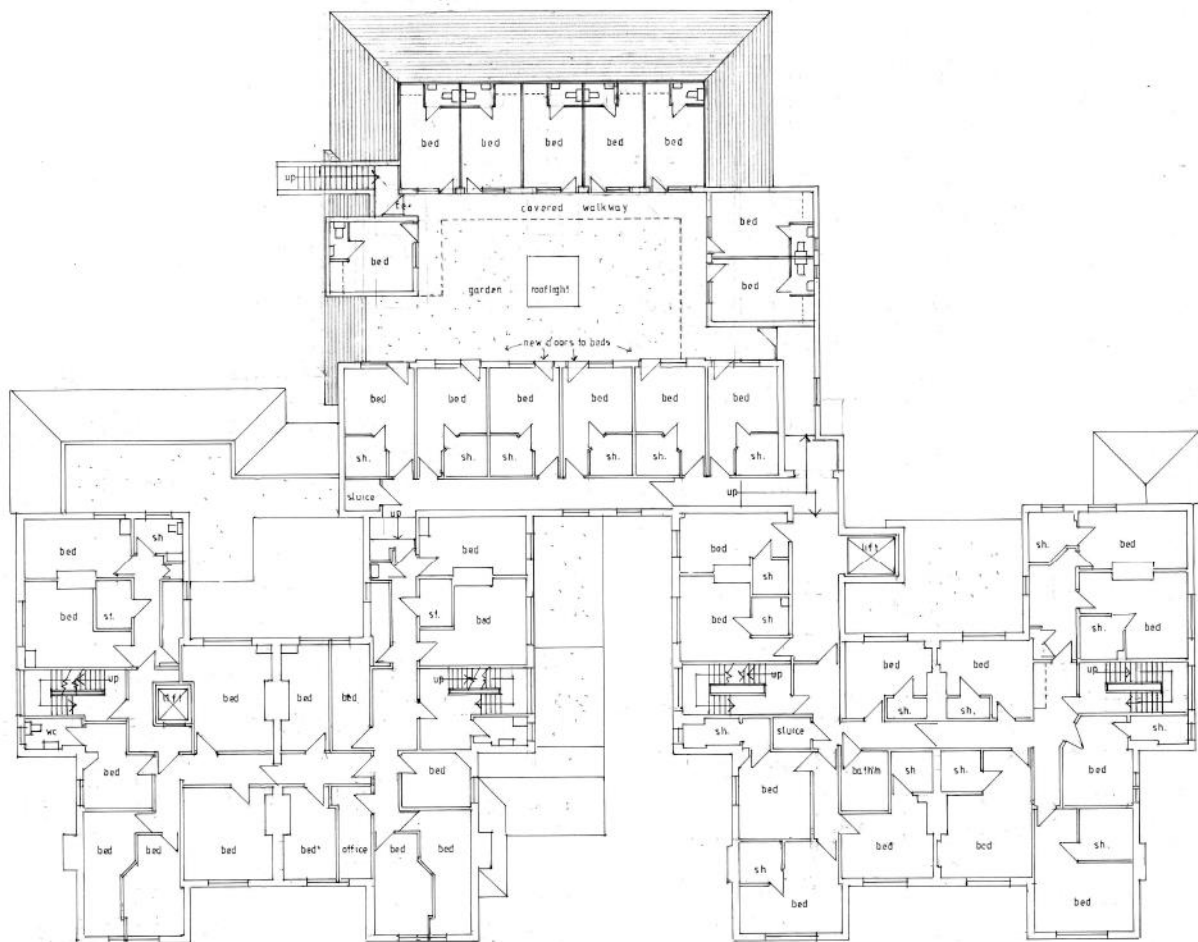
4.1 The revised scheme provides for a first-floor extension to the rear of the building. This preserves the existing garden amenity space (previously proposed for development).

4.2 The new proposals also provide of first floor amenity space to serve the new care units. The intention is to retain the use of existing space for residents and to create new space for the proposed units. Demand for the existing garden would be at the current level.

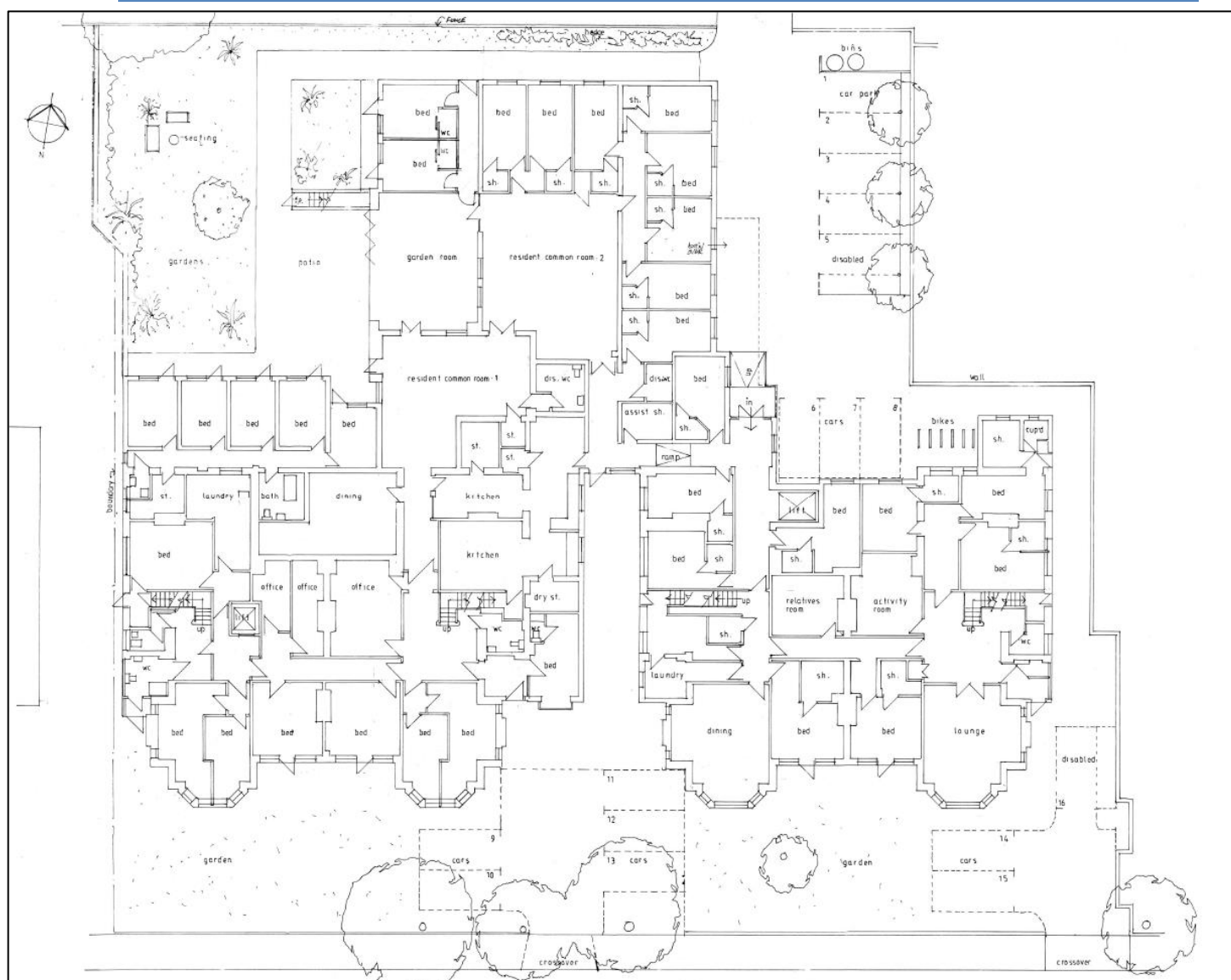
4.3 The images below are taken form the revised submitted plans.



Proposed Elevations



Proposed first floor plans



Proposed Ground Floor Plans

- 4.4 The current application proposals provide for an additional 8 car parking spaces, one of which is a dedicated disabled space.
- 4.2 The 8 additional spaces now shown match those previously approved (*Ref 140369*) for the extension of the care home in 2015.
- 4.3 There has never been a demand for the additional spaces given the staff travel to work patterns (low car usage), the daily spread of visitor times and the fact that during the day, on-street car parking spaces are generally available.

4.4 The applicant would commit to providing the additional spaces as part of this new application.

5. Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

5.1 The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. It states that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date development plan should be approved without delay. At the heart of the NPPF is the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that the achievement of sustainable development includes three, mutually dependant elements, namely; economic, social, and environmental. All three of these are pertinent to this application and the provision of units to meet local housing need in a sustainable location.

Reading Borough Local Plan, November 2019

5.2 The Local Plan was adopted in November 2019 and sets the policies for development in Reading up to 2036. It pre-dates the most recent revision of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'), updated in July 2021. Whilst not replacing the Development Plan as the starting point for decision-taking, this provides the most up-to-date planning policy guidance, therefore an important material consideration. Covering Letter:

5.3 The relevant policies include (but are not limited to): -

- CC1 - Presumption in favour of sustainable development –
- CC2 - Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC6 - Accessibility and the Intensity of Development

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- CC7 - Design and the Public Realm
 - CC8 - Safeguarding Amenity - EN12
 - Biodiversity and the Green Network
 - EN15 - Air Quality –
 - EN16 - Pollution and Water Resources –
 - EN18 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems –
 - H10 - Private and Communal Outdoor Space –
 - TR3 - Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters –
 - TR5 - Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

6. Car Parking Assessment

6.1 There are a total of 60 staff members employed by Florence House. Staff roles include the following:

- Care staff
- House keepers/cleaners
- Laundry staff
- Kitchen staff
- Admin and Managers.

6.2 At any one time, there are no more than 30 staff on site, working in shift patterns, and dependant of tasks undertaken throughout the day.

6.3 The application proposals will generate the need for one additional full-time member of staff on site, given most of the services are already provided on site.

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- 6.4 No more than 8 care staff work on site at any one time normally between 8am and 8 pm (daytime shifts), and 8pm to 8am (nighttime shifts). Busiest times in terms of care staff onsite would be 8am and 8 pm when staff hand overs take place.
- 6.5 Visitor times are not controlled. However, visitors (relatives of residents) generally come to site after 10:30 am each day, and thereafter, throughout the day.
- 6.6 The vast majority of care staff are local to the area and walk to work or are dropped off by family members. Most of the onsite car parking spaces are used by visitors to the care home, visiting relative in care.
- 6.7 Rarely is the existing 8 space car park full (accommodating 8 spaces).

7. Determining Issues

Principle

- 7.1 There is significant demand for the care spaces in the Reading area and this application will serve to meet some that need and demand.
- 7.2 The application is in a sustainable location close to demand and accessible to local staff.
- 7.3 The application proposal comply with the objectives of sustainable development set out in both national and local policy.

Design Proposals

- 7.4 The current design proposals overcome concerns raised previously by planning officers over the loss of amenity space. The existing garden space is preserved, whilst additional amenity space is created at first floor level. This is a net gain.
- 7.5 The design proposals are contextual and reflective of the host building and the surrounding area.

Car Parking

- 7.6 The current proposal represents a mere 9.6% increase in the number of rooms. The additional car parking spaces committed to as part of this application equates to a 100% increase.
- 7.7 The Care Home currently generates little demand for on-street car parking, given that care and household staff generally do not come to work by car (they walk from homes nearby, use public transport or are dropped off).
- 7.8 Visitor demand is spread throughout the day.
- 7.9 The current proposals would provide 8 additional spaces on site that would safely accommodate any additional demand created by the new rooms now proposed.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 In planning terms, given the evidence presented in this report, and taking a pragmatic balanced view on need and limited impact it is reasonable to conclude that the application proposals are acceptable and overcome previous concerns..