

Committee date	Tuesday 4 April 2023
Application reference Site address	23/00037/FUL– 39-43 Kingsfield Road Watford Herts WD19 4TQ
Proposal	Refurbishment and extension of existing care home in order to cater for adult care for those with learning difficulties and autism.
Applicant	Magic Life, Mr S Oliver
Agent	AJM Planning
Type of application	Full planning application
Reason for committee item	5 or more objections submitted
Target decision date	5 April 2023
Statutory publicity	Neighbour Letters
Case officer	Chris Osgathorp chris.osgathorp@watford.gov.uk
Ward	Oxhey

1. Recommendation

1.1 That planning permission be granted subject to conditions as set out in section 8 of this report.

2. Site and surroundings

2.1 The subject property is a large two-storey building on the eastern side of Kingsfield Road, which backs onto a railway line.

2.2 The subject property is a care home within Use Class C2. It has a total of 24no. bedrooms and associated communal living and staff/office rooms. The care home currently appears to be vacant.

2.3 The site does not fall within a Conservation Area and the site is not within proximity to any listed or locally listed buildings.

2.4 The site lies within a Controlled Parking Zone (Zone Y), restricting car parking between the hours of 10am – 12noon Monday-Friday.

3. Summary of the proposal

3.1 Proposal

3.2 The application proposes refurbishment and extension of the existing care home in order to cater for adult care for those with learning difficulties and autism.

3.3 Whilst the proposed use would remain within Use Class C2 and therefore not usually require planning permission, Condition 2 of planning permission Ref. 9/58/82 included a restriction that the use shall be for a home providing “for

the boarding, care and maintenance of old people only". As the proposal would accommodate adults not limited to elderly people, planning permission for the proposed use is required.

- 3.4 The building would be split into 2 houses which would be accessed through a shared internal lobby. Each house would provide 7 studios and communal kitchen/dining/living area. There would also be a staff office at ground floor and sensory room at first floor that would be accessible from both houses. Internal lifts would be installed. An office and staff room would be provided at second floor.
- 3.5 The rear garden would be shared and a new outbuilding would provide an activity and exercise space.
- 3.6 The proposal includes the erection of a two storey rear extension (around 4m beyond the existing first floor rear bay windows) and replacement of the existing ground floor extension with a new ground floor extension – which would be wider but not project further into the garden. There would also be new pitched roofs to provide a more coherent and harmonious appearance to the building.
- 3.7 Two on-site parking spaces are proposed in a tandem arrangement. These spaces would be accessed from an existing dropped kerb.
- 3.8 **Conclusion**
- 3.9 Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan states that proposals for new specialist care and supported living accommodation will be supported. The proposed accommodation for people with learning difficulties and autism is therefore acceptable in principle. The proposal would provide a significant improvement upon the layout and facilities of the existing care home and it therefore accords with Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan.
- 3.10 The proposed development would provide a high quality living environment for future residents, and it is not considered that significant harm would be caused to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.
- 3.11 The depth of the proposed two storey extension, at around 4m, would be proportionate to the existing building, and the ground floor extension would project no further to the rear than existing. Pitched roofs would cover the existing and proposed upper floor elements, which would appear more coherent and unified than the existing building. Furthermore, there would be greater uniformity to the external materials and window style/alignment. Bay windows and brick detailing would help to break down the massing of the building and provide visual interest. With these considerations in mind, the

alterations would enhance the character and appearance the host building and the surrounding area.

- 3.12 The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposal. Taking into account the accessible location of the site, the significant reduction in bedrooms at the premises and the proposed measures to encourage non-car journeys, it is not considered that the proposal would cause a material increase in demand for on-street parking compared to the existing use. The transport impacts of the proposal are therefore acceptable.
- 3.13 Matters relating to trees and ecology are considered to be acceptable and appropriate conditions could be imposed to mitigate the impact of the development.
- 3.14 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development accords with the development plan as a whole and so it is recommended for approval, subject to conditions.

4. Relevant policies

- 4.1 Members should refer to the background papers attached to the agenda. These highlight the policy framework under which this application is determined. Specific policy considerations with regard to this particular application are detailed in section 6 below.

5. Relevant site history/background information

- 5.1 22/01246/VAR - Variation of Condition 2 of planning permission 9/58/82 to allow for adult care for those with learning difficulties and autism. Withdrawn. December 2022.

22/01223/FUL - Refurbishment and extension of Existing Care Home including erection of outbuilding. Withdrawn. December 2022.

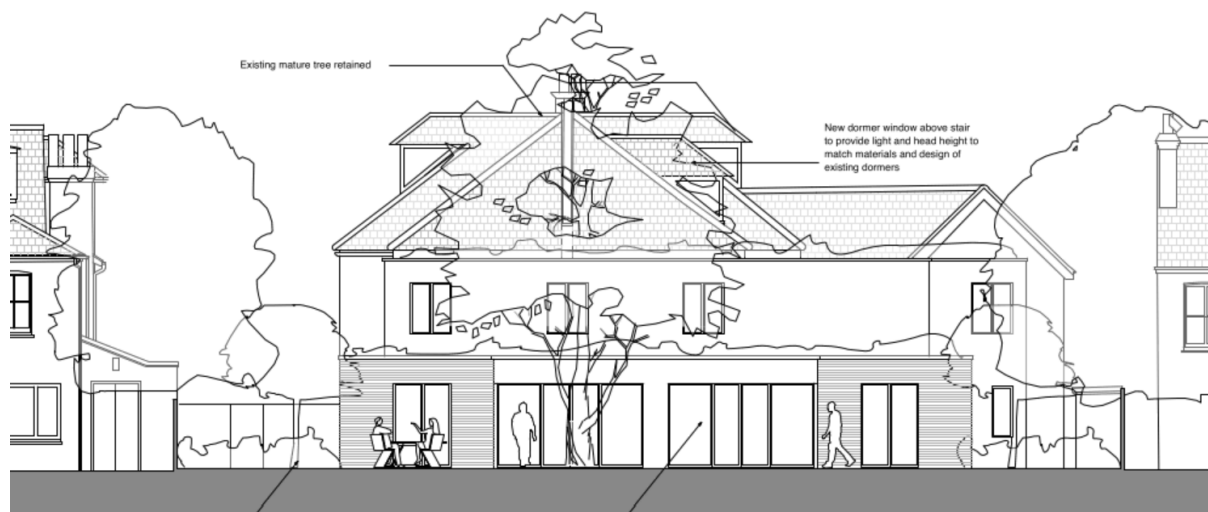


Fig. 1. Proposed rear elevation Ref. 22/01223/FUL. Includes flat roofed part two storey/part single rear extension. Withdrawn following concerns from officers about poor quality design and lack of integration with the building.

22/00440/FUL - Demolition of existing care home and erection of 9 flats with associated landscaping and parking (resubmission of LPA ref 21/01873/FUL). Refused planning permission. May 2022.

21/01873/FUL - Demolition of existing care home and erection of 9 flats comprising 1 x 1-bedroom, 7 x 2-bedroom and 1 x 3-bedroom flats with associated landscaping and parking. Refused planning permission. March 2022.

9/0223/94 – Change of use of no 43 from residential use to a residential home for the elderly in conjunction with no 39-41 and erection of one two-storey front extension, one single storey rear extension and one first floor rear ext. Conditional planning permission July 1994.

9/58/82 – Change of use from dwelling house to residential home for elderly people. Conditional planning permission March 1982.

Condition 2 says *“The change of use hereby permitted shall be for a home providing for the boarding, care and maintenance of old people only as defined in section 1 of the Residential Homes Act 1980 and for no other purposes (including any other purpose within Class XIV of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes Order 1972)”*.

The reason given for the condition was *“to enable the Local Planning Authority to control future use of the property having regard to its unsuitability for other purposes within Class XIV of the said Order”*. Nevertheless, no specific reason was given as to why another purpose within the same Use Class was considered to be unsuitable.

6. Main considerations

6.1 The main issues to be considered in the determination of this application are:

- (a) Principle of residential development
- (b) The effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area
- (c) The effect on the living conditions of neighbouring properties
- (d) Whether an acceptable standard of amenity for future occupiers would be provided
- (e) Access, parking and highway matters
- (f) The effect of the proposal on trees
- (g) Ecology

6.2 (a) Principle of residential development

Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan states that proposals for new specialist care and supported living accommodation will be supported. The proposed development consists of the refurbishment and extension of the existing care home in order to cater for adult care for those with learning difficulties and autism, which is supported in principle. As discussed elsewhere in this report, the proposal would provide a significant improvement upon the layout and facilities of the existing care home and it therefore accords with Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan.

6.3 (b) Character and appearance of the area

Kingsfield Road predominantly comprises two storey dwellings of varied architectural design that are sited on a consistent building line. There are a mix of hipped and gable roof forms, and two storey front bays are a characteristic feature. The external walls display a variety of finishes, including brick and render.

6.4 The existing property has previously had several side and rear extensions with various pitched, gabled and flat roof forms. There is a complete lack of coherence to the rear elevation due to the different materials, window size/alignment and roof forms. The various add-ons result in a disjointed and poor quality appearance.

6.5 Planning application Ref. 22/01223/FUL was withdrawn following officers' concerns regarding the poor quality appearance of the proposed part two storey/part single storey rear extension. This was due to the bulk and massing of the extension, poorly integrated flat roof form, and substandard materials and fenestration.

6.6 The current application has sought to address these issues through a significantly improved design – particularly in relation to the rear of the building. The depth of the proposed two storey extension, at around 4m, would be proportionate to the existing building, and the ground floor extension would project no further to the rear than existing. Pitched roofs would cover the existing and proposed upper floor elements, which would provide a more coherent and unified appearance compared to the existing situation. Furthermore, there would be greater uniformity to the external materials and window style/alignment. Bay windows and brick detailing would help to break down the massing of the building and provide visual interest.

Consequently, the alterations would enhance the character and appearance the host building and the surrounding area.

- 6.7 Insofar as the front elevation is concerned, there would be minimal changes. The position of the front entrance would be altered with minor changes to window/door openings, which is acceptable. There would also be a positive change through the removal of the existing side dormers.
- 6.8 The proposed outbuilding would be proportionate to the size of the plot and set away from the side and rear boundaries. The single storey height of the building would limit its visual impact, and the timber cladding on the external walls would provide an acceptable appearance.
- 6.9 New landscaping would be provided to the front and rear gardens, which is acceptable. Full details of the proposed landscaping could be secured through the imposition of a planning condition.
- 6.10 For the above reasons, it is considered that the proposal would enhance the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area. The proposal therefore accords with Policies QD6.2 and QD6.4 of the Local Plan.
- 6.11 (c) Living conditions of neighbouring properties

The footprint of the ground floor element adjacent to No. 37 Kingsfield Road would be reduced as a result of the proposal. Furthermore, the existing side-facing bedroom windows would be removed and replaced by small secondary windows, which would restrict overlooking into the neighbouring property. At upper floor level, the depth of the building would be increased by around 2.3m adjacent to No. 37 (the deepest part would be much further from the boundary) and the existing flat roof would be replaced by a pitched roof. The closest element of the upper floor extension would extend only slightly beyond the two storey rear outrigger of No. 37. Having regard to the modest depth of the extension, the pitch of the proposed roof away from the boundary, and the spacing maintained to the rear and side windows of No. 37, it is not considered that the proposal would cause a significant loss of daylight, sunlight, outlook or privacy to the neighbouring property.

- 6.12 The proposed outbuilding would be set away from the boundary with No. 37, which, together with its single storey height, would ensure that the outbuilding would not cause a significant loss of light or outlook to the neighbouring property.

- 6.13 A Daylight and Sunlight Assessment¹ prepared in accordance with the recognised Building Research Establishment Methodology² has been submitted with the application. This confirms that all neighbouring habitable windows at No. 37 would meet the respective Vertical Sky Component and Daylight Distribution tests for daylight, and Annual Probable Sunlight Hours and Winter Sunlight Hours tests for sunlight with the proposed development in place³. Furthermore, in respect the overshadowing of neighbouring gardens, the proposal meets the BRE test.
- 6.14 There would be some increase in bulk at ground and upper floor towards the boundary with No. 45 Kingsfield Road. This is due to the proposed two storey extension – which would extend around 4.5m beyond the rear elevation of No. 45 – and the increased width of the ground floor rear extension which would extend closer to the boundary than the existing extension. Nevertheless, the proposed extensions would be set away from the boundary by about 4.5m. At this degree of separation, the proposed development would not cause a significant loss of daylight, sunlight or outlook to the neighbouring property. The submitted Daylight and Sunlight Assessment confirms that the neighbouring windows and garden would meet the aforementioned BRE Guidance tests for daylight, sunlight and overshadowing with the development in place.
- 6.15 Moreover, the proposal would not cause a significant increase in overlooking compared to the existing situation. The ground floor extension includes windows in the southern elevation, which look towards No. 45. However, having regard to the ground floor position of the windows, along with the distance maintained to the boundary and the existing boundary screening, there would not be a significant loss of privacy to the neighbouring occupiers.
- 6.16 The Planning Statement notes that the applicant specialises in supporting individuals requiring a high level of care during the day (minimum of 1:1 staff member to resident ratio), with the level of care being reduced in the evening to provide residents some independence. The staffing would include an on-site manager, carers, activity co-ordinator and maintenance officer. The Planning Statement comments that all staff will have an enhanced DBS check and have mandatory medication training, challenging behaviour training, care certificate and any other training that is relevant to the home.

¹ Carried out by Right of Light Consulting Chartered Surveyors dated 21 February 2023

² Building Research Establishment 'Site layout planning for daylight and sunlight. A guide to good practice. 2022 Edition.

³ See Section 3 of the Daylight and Sunlight Assessment for an explanation of the BRE Methodology.

- 6.17 The Planning Statement sets out that prior to a tenancy agreement being signed, each resident would be subject to a comprehensive admissions assessment, which would address presenting problems, identifying needs and their suitability for admission. This is to ensure that the environment caters for the person's particular needs and provides for appropriate management of the home. As discussed in the report, the proposed layout would provide high quality accommodation for future residents and it is considered that any challenges could be appropriately managed by on-site staff. It is acknowledged that during the night-time there would not be an on-site staff presence, however, with appropriate management of the home it is not considered that significant disturbance to neighbouring residents is likely. The applicant states that they operate the service on a 24 hour basis and there will always be a contact for neighbours should there be any occasion where urgent intervention is required. Furthermore, the applicant sets out that they will look to work with the local community to discuss any concerns and seek to resolve problems.
- 6.18 Having regard to the above, it should also be borne in mind that Magic Life provides care services at other locations and has been inspected by the Care Quality Commission (the CQC). The CQC report of 11 March 2020 noted that Magic Life is a domiciliary care service providing personal care to people living in their own home within supported living projects. At the time of the inspection, the service was supporting people with learning difficulties, autism and mental health problems. The service had an overall rating of good and was rated good for all areas including safety, effectiveness, caring, responsive and well-led. Amongst other things, the report stated that *"people's needs were comprehensively assessed prior to any placement and support plan being agreed to confirm the service could effectively meet their needs"*. With this in mind, it is considered likely that the care home will be appropriately managed.
- 6.19 It is entirely appropriate that supported living accommodation for people with learning difficulties and autism is provided in established residential areas so as to ensure that they are socially included as part of the community. In this respect, due regard has been given to the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which sets out the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (including people with disabilities) and people who do not share it. There is no substantive evidence that local residents would be subject to significant noise or disturbance, and any issues could be appropriately managed by the service provider.

6.20 For the above reasons, the proposed development would not cause significant harm to the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. The proposal therefore accords with Policy CC8.5 of the Local Plan, which states that development should be designed to protect the amenity of adjacent land uses and their occupants.

6.21 (d) Standard of amenity for future occupiers

The studios of each house would comprise a bedroom and en-suite, ranging in size between 23 – 30 sqm. Furthermore, the residents would have access to large communal kitchen/dining/living areas at ground floor measuring around 56sqm for House 1 and 53sqm for House 2. There would also be a 20sqm sensory room at first floor that would be accessible to the residents of both houses. All habitable spaces would benefit from adequate levels of natural lighting and outlook.

6.22 A large entrance lobby and wide corridors would contribute to the spacious feel of the accommodation, and each house would have lifts which would provide an accessible environment for future residents. Further benefits to accessibility would be provided through the re-landscaping of the front garden, which would include a shallower ramped access.

6.23 Future residents would have access to a large rear garden, which would contribute positively to wellbeing. The proposed outbuilding would add to the facilities available to residents through the provision of an activity and exercise space.

6.24 Having regard to the above, the proposed layout would provide high quality and spacious living conditions for future occupiers. In this respect, the proposal is a significant improvement upon the layout and facilities of the existing care home which includes a large number of small bedrooms, limited communal space, narrow corridors/circulation and no lift provision. The proposal therefore accords with Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan.

6.25 (e) Access, parking and highway matters

The Highway Authority has raised no objection to the proposal and notes that the application site is in an accessible location. In particular, the site is within an easy walking distance of around 400m from Bushey Railway Station, which provides regular services to London Euston, Watford Junction and Tring. There are also bus stops on Eastbury Road about 300m away, which provide routes to Watford, Abbots Langley, Garston and South Oxhey, among other destinations. Furthermore, retail, leisure and employment uses are within walking distance. Due to the passenger transport services and shops/other

destinations available in the immediate vicinity, car use is not essential for day to day living activities in this location.

- 6.26 The existing premises was formerly used as a care home with 24 bedrooms and associated communal living staff/office rooms. The proposal would reduce the number of bedrooms/studios to 14 (1 person per studio) and so there would be a significant reduction in residential occupancy compared to the previous care home. The Planning Statement notes that the applicant's experience of other facilities is that only staff and occasional family members dropping off or visiting residents utilise parking on site. Furthermore, it is stated that the home will provide accommodation for adults who because of their care needs would be unable to hold a driving licence. Officer's see no reason to dispute this.
- 6.27 Consequently, it is likely that any parking generated by the proposal would be from staff/visitors. In this respect, it would be similar to the previous use as a care home for the elderly. The Planning Statement notes that the level of care to be provided is likely to be flexible, however, the applicant specialises in supporting individuals requiring a high level of care during the day (minimum of 1:1 staff member to resident ratio during the day) with the level being reduced in the evening (around 7 staff). Precise details of the staffing of the previous elderly care home use are not known. Nevertheless, due to the marked reduction in residents, the amount of staff/visitor trips associated with the current proposal are not likely to be materially greater and so it is not expected that there would be a significant increase in demand for on-street parking.
- 6.28 Hertfordshire County Council's Travel Plan Guidance March 2020 sets out that a Full Travel Plan is required for residential institutions with more than 50 beds. For between 30-50 beds, a Travel Plan Statement should be submitted. As such, the care home of 14 beds does not meet the threshold for requiring either a Travel Plan Statement or a Full Travel Plan. Nevertheless, the applicant has provided a Travel Plan Statement. Amongst other things, this includes measures to appoint a Sustainable Travel Champion who will continually promote sustainable transport choices, and to provide travel information for staff and visitors. It is also noted that safe and secure cycling parking would be provided to encourage cycle trips.
- 6.29 Taking into consideration the accessible location of the site, the significant reduction in bedrooms at the premises and the measures to encourage non-car journeys, it is not considered that the proposal would not cause a material

increase in demand for on-street parking compared to the existing use. The transport impacts of the proposal are therefore acceptable.

6.30 Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan says that proposals should be designed to include pick-up and drop-off facilities close to the principal entrance that are able to accommodate specialist transport vehicles. However, because the proposal relates to an existing building, it is not possible to include new pick-up facilities. The Planning Statement notes that whilst in the majority of cases residents might have learning difficulties, they are able bodied and therefore standard transport modes are appropriate. Officers see no reason to disagree. Two parking spaces (including one disabled space) would be provided to the side of the building and served by an existing vehicular crossover, which is acceptable.

6.31 (f) Trees

No trees within or adjacent to the application site are protected by a tree preservation order. An Arboricultural Impact Assessment⁴ (the Arboricultural Report) has been submitted with the application, which shows that 5no. trees in the rear garden would be removed (T5 Ash, T7 Plum, T8 & T9 Black Poplar, and T11 Lawson Cypress). These are all low quality Category C or Category U trees due to their limited landscape value and/or poor quality condition and so their removal is acceptable. All other trees would be retained and protected during construction works. It is considered that appropriate replacement tree planting would mitigate the loss of the trees and this could be secured through a landscaping condition.

6.32 The Arboricultural Report shows that there are moderate quality Category B trees outside the application site. This includes T10 Black Poplar and T13 Wild Cherry within the garden of No. 37 Kingsfield Road, and T2 Cider Gum at No. 45. The proposed single storey rear extension would have a very minor encroachment into the root protection area (RPA) of T2 Cider Gum, however, this would not harm the health of the tree. The trees adjacent to the boundary with No. 45 would be protected by tree protection fencing in accordance with BS5837:2012 specifications, as shown on the Tree Protection Plan⁵. There would also be ground protection within the RPA of tree T2 Cider Gum to protect the roots during construction.

6.33 Whilst the proposed extension would be outside the RPAs of all other trees, the proposed outbuilding would be within the RPA of T10 Black Poplar. As set out within the method statement of the Arboricultural Report, it would be

⁴ Prepared by Arboricultural Solutions LLP dated August 2022

⁵ Drawing No. TCP_39_41KINGSFLDRD_2 Rev A

necessary for the outbuilding to have piled foundations and for excavations to be undertaken by hand digging to protect the tree roots. Furthermore, tree protection fencing and ground protection is necessary in the positions shown on the Tree Protection Plan. A condition should be imposed to require the proposed protection measures to be implemented for the full duration of construction works. The proposal therefore accords with Policies NE9.1 and NE9.2 of the Local Plan.

6.34 (g) Ecology

A Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment⁶ was submitted with previous application Ref. 22/00440/FUL, which found no evidence of protected or notable species. Given that this was carried out as recently as March 2022, it is not considered that additional surveys are necessary. The Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment suggested enhancements to biodiversity at the site, including bat, bird and insect boxes as well as wildlife-friendly planting and hedgehog corridors. A landscaping condition to include a detailed scheme of enhancements to biodiversity at the site should be attached to any grant of permission. The proposal therefore accords with Policy NE9.1 and NE9.8 of the Local Plan

7.1 Consultation responses received

Consultee	Comment Summary	Officer response
Highway Authority	No objection.	It is noted that the Highway Authority has requested a condition relating to the submission of a Construction Management Statement. Nevertheless, construction traffic would be low due to the modest scale of the proposed development and so it is not proportionate to require details of the routing of construction vehicles, delivery timings and estimated number of construction vehicles etc. There are controls outside the planning system, including the Highways Act 1980, to deal with matters such as obstruction or mud deposits in the highway etc.

⁶ Prepared by Sound Ecology Report: SE2174

Hertfordshire Growth & Infrastructure Unit	No comments.	Noted.
Network Rail	No objection.	Noted.
Waste & Recycling	No comments.	Noted.
Arboricultural Officer	No objection.	Noted.

7.2 Interested parties

Letters were sent to 11 properties in the surrounding area and 9 letters of objection have been received. The main comments are summarised below, the full letters are available to view online:

Objection comment	Officer comments
Inadequate parking and more traffic.	This is considered in paragraphs 6.25 – 6.29 of the report.
Concerns about the potential for disturbances.	This is considered in paragraphs 6.16- 6.19 of the report.

<p>It's unclear whether Hertfordshire County Council Adult Social Care Commissioners have been consulted on the proposal and whether they are in support and whether it meets local needs.</p> <p>Is Magic Life an approved provider of supported living services to Hertfordshire County Council Adult Social Care services? What local authorities will be making placements to the service?</p> <p>The registered headquarters for Magic Life is Haringey, how will the organisation's management operate from such a distance? Has the scheme been approved by the CQC?</p>	<p>All consultation with Hertfordshire County Council regarding services they are responsible for goes through the Hertfordshire Growth and Infrastructure Unit (apart from the Highway Authority). The response from H.C.C. is available to view on the Council's website, which sets out that they have no comment to make regarding their services.</p> <p>Policy HO3.5 of the Local Plan states that proposals for new specialist care and supported living accommodation will be supported and so the scheme is acceptable in principle.</p> <p>Planning decisions relate to land-use planning and it is not within the jurisdiction of planning to control where placements are made from.</p> <p>Operational management of the care home is a matter for the applicant and they would need to comply with relevant legislation and guidelines relating to care services.</p> <p>Care providers carrying out regulated activities are required to be registered and are regulated and monitored by the CQC.</p>
<p>Loss of daylight, sunlight and privacy to No. 37 Kingsfield Road.</p>	<p>This is considered in paragraphs 6.11-6.12 of the report.</p>
<p>Loss of light and outlook to No. 45 Kingsfield Road.</p>	<p>This is considered in paragraphs 6.14 – 6.15 of the report.</p>

<p>The proposed extensions would be larger than previously refused applications.</p> <p>The Council's reasons for refusing planning application Ref. 21/01873/FUL were 'The part 2 storey, part single storey rear projection of the proposed building would extend a considerable distance into the garden. Whilst this would be similar in footprint to the existing building, the additional storey would result in a significant increase in built form to the rear. The massing of this element would appear overly bulky, and its design and flat roofed form would appear unrelated to the front part of the proposal and the surrounding properties in the site's context'.</p> <p>This new application increases the size and massing of the building to the rear.</p>	<p>It is a well-established planning principle that each application should be considered on its own merits.</p> <p>The current scheme is materially different to the previous proposals that were refused planning permission. In particular, the development refused under Ref. 21/01873/FUL comprised the complete demolition of the existing building and the erection of a new building. It featured a two storey element that would extend significantly further into the rear garden than the current proposal. It also included an un-sympathetic flat roof that would not relate well to the front part of the proposal (see Appendix 1 for the refused drawings).</p> <p>The current scheme includes a two storey rear extension to the existing building, which would not be as deep, and includes a pitched roof that would relate well to the main building.</p> <p>It is also noted that previous applications have not been refused due to loss of light or outlook to neighbours.</p>
<p>The building line is considerably extended into the rear garden bringing the development much closer to No. 37.</p> <p>The flank elevation and ground floor drawing shows an inaccurate outline of our house – our ground floor is at least 4m smaller than indicated on the plan – we do not line up with the proposed new ground floor central extension.</p>	<p>The ground floor of the proposed extension would not extend beyond the existing ground floor extension.</p> <p>Whilst the first floor would extend further to the rear, this would be by only around 2.3m adjacent to No. 37. The extension would not be closer to the side boundary than the existing building.</p> <p>The proposed ground floor plan shows that No. 37 is around 16m deep, which corresponds with the measurements on the Council's GIS mapping. The plans do</p>

	not indicate that No. 37 lines up with the ground floor central extension (it is accurately shown that the ground floor extension would extend beyond the rear of No. 37). As such, the proposed plans are accurate and there is no substantive evidence to indicate otherwise.
Noise and disturbance caused by proposed activity building. The activity building will be an eyesore and cause loss of privacy to neighbouring properties.	It is not considered that use of the activity building would cause a significant increase in noise and disturbance. The design of the building is considered to be acceptable and in keeping with typical garden buildings.
Concerns about impact on trees.	This is considered in paragraphs 6.31 – 6.33 of the report.
Impact on wildlife.	This is considered in paragraph 6.34 of the report.
The application should not be approved until the landscaping plan has been prepared as this may have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties.	A landscaping scheme could be secured through planning condition. It is not considered that this would be detrimental to neighbouring properties.
The changes to the front of the building will make it look more commercial and will stand out.	The changes to the front of the building would be of a minor nature and it is not considered that they would create a commercial appearance.
Loss of property value.	This is not a material planning consideration.

8. Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

Conditions

1. Time Limit

The development to which this permission relates shall be begun within a period of three years commencing on the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Approved Drawings and Documents

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved drawings:

PP-01; PP-02 Rev A; PP-03; PP-04; PP-05; PP-10; PP-11; PP-12; PP-13;
PP-15 Rev A; PP-16 Rev A; PP-17 Rev A; PP-18 Rev A; PP-19 Rev A;
PP-20 Rev A; PP-21 Rev A; PP-22 Rev A; PP-23 Rev A; PP-24 Rev A;
PP-25 Rev A; PP-26 Rev A; PP-27 Rev A; PP-28 Rev A.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and in the interests of proper planning.

3. Materials

No development (apart from demolition) above ground level shall be carried out until full details of the materials to be used for all the external finishes of the development hereby approved, including all external walls, all roofs, doors, windows, fascias, rainwater and foul drainage goods, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development applies high quality materials that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the area, in accordance with Policies QD6.2 and QD6.4 of the Watford Local Plan 2021-2038.

4. Hard and Soft Landscaping

Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, full details of both hard and soft landscaping works, including:

- trees and soft landscaping to be planted (including location, species, density and planting size),
- a scheme of ecological enhancements,
- details of any changes to ground levels,
- materials for all pathways, all hard surfacing and amenity areas/paving, and,
- boundary treatments,

shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The approved landscaping scheme, with the exception of the planting, shall be completed prior to any occupation of the development. The proposed

planting shall be completed not later than the first available planting and seeding season after completion of the development. Any new trees or plants which within a period of five years, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species, or in accordance with details approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of the visual appearance of the site and to ensure that enhancements to biodiversity are provided in accordance with Policies NE9.1 and NE9.8 of the Watford Local Plan 2021-2038.

5. Vehicular access

The on-site parking area shall only be accessed via the dropped kerb shown on drawing No. PP-16 Rev A. Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, all other existing dropped kerbs serving the property shall be permanently closed and the footway/kerb re-installed.

Reason: In the interests of highway safety.

6. Electric vehicle charging

Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, an electric vehicle charging point to serve each of the 2 on-site parking spaces shall be installed and made available for use. The electric charging infrastructure shall be retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: To ensure that the proposed development achieves high levels of sustainability, in accordance with Policy ST11.5 of the Watford Local Plan 2021-2038.

7. Refuse and recycling storage

Prior to the first occupation of the development hereby approved, refuse and recycling storage facilities shall be provided in accordance with the details shown on the approved plans. The storage facility shall be retained at all times thereafter.

Reason: In the interests of the visual amenity of the site.

8. Tree Works and Protection Measures

The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance with the tree works and tree protection measures set out in the Arboricultural Impact Assessment and Arboricultural Method Statement prepared by Arboricultural Solutions LLP Revision 1 January 2023.

Reason: To maintain the health of protected trees, in accordance with Policies NE9.1 and NE9.2 of the Watford Local Plan 2021-2038.

9. Water efficiency

The development hereby approved shall be constructed to meet the water efficiency optional requirement of 110 litres of water per person per day, as set out in The Building Regulations (2010) Approved Document G Requirement G2 and Regulation 36.

Reason: To minimise the environmental impact of the proposed development, in accordance with Policy CC8.3 of the Watford Local Plan 2021-2038.

10. Accessible dwellings

The development hereby approved shall be constructed to M4(2): Accessible and adaptable dwellings or M4(3): Wheelchair user dwellings of The Building Regulations (2010) Access to and Use of Buildings, Approved Document M (2015 as amended), Volume 1: Dwellings.

Reason: To meet the needs of older people and those with mobility issues, in accordance with Policy HO3.10 of the Watford Local Plan 2021-2038.

11. Obscure glass

The new first floor windows in the northern and southern side elevations of the building shall be (i) obscure-glazed, and (ii) non-opening unless the parts of the window which can be opened are more than 1.7 metres above the floor of the room in which the window is installed.

Reason: To protect the privacy of the occupiers of neighbouring properties.

Informatives

1. IN907 – Positive and proactive statement
2. IN909 – Street naming and numbering
3. IN910 – Building Regulations
4. IN911 – Party Wall Act
5. IN912 – Hours of Construction
6. IN913 – Community Infrastructure Levy Liability