



| PLANNING STATEMENT |   | FOR PLANNING                                             | JOB NO. 4055 |
|--------------------|---|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| CLIENT             | : | LRH Homes                                                |              |
| PROJECT            | : | Proposed Extension to Care Home                          |              |
| LOCATION           | : | Belmont Castle, Portsdown Hill Road, Bedhampton, PO9 3JY |              |
| DATE               | : | 23 April 2014                                            |              |

## Background

In September 2007 a Planning Application Approval was granted for the extension of Belmont Castle Care Home by the Planning Department, (Ref No: 06/52710/008) of Havant Borough Council. The application was prepared and submitted by PWP Architects by satisfying all the required planning conditions.

Following a seven year period where no works took place on site, the client has now decided to re-submit a slightly amended planning application which takes under consideration new local policy and current regulations.

Our preliminary Design and Access Statement describes the new proposal and is set out below.

## Local Context and Environment

The site is located in Bedhampton, atop the northern slope of Portsdown Hill. It is on the edge of the urban area and sited near the crest of the hill, enjoying views to the north across a large valley towards the South Downs. The North West of the site is screened by large trees that partially obscure the buildings from view, particularly from the A3 (M) and the Havant Gap.

The original building on the site is a nineteenth century Grade II listed villa in a mock castle style, including castellations and a tower. It is of brick with stone details creating a stripped Gothic style appearance. It has three floors with the lowest at semi-basement level. From the valley to the north, only the eastern end and tower of the original house are visible.

An extension of the building was added in the late 1980s in a style which in some ways respected

the original architecture. The newer wing is also of brick but uses reconstituted stone and simulated castellations. It has a more complex appearance with half octagon towers and large plain reconstituted stone surrounds to openings. The building's windows shape is a mixture of gothic style, squared and circular windows.

This part of the building steps up to three stories above ground as the slope of the hill begins to fall away and is well screened from views from outside the site by the trees to the North West.



## Local Planning Policy

Policy CS7, Community Support and Inclusion, of the Havant Borough Core Strategy (Local Development Framework 2011) identifies the need for new services for older people, stating that:

*'4.15 The projected population figures for the borough indicate that the over 60 age group is expected to grow disproportionately within the overall population until 2026. This presents specific challenges in relation to housing, health and care needs.'*

*'4.17 ... The borough currently has the second largest number of over 60s in Hampshire (28,000 in 2007) or 20% of the population; this is projected to rise to 27% by 2026.'*

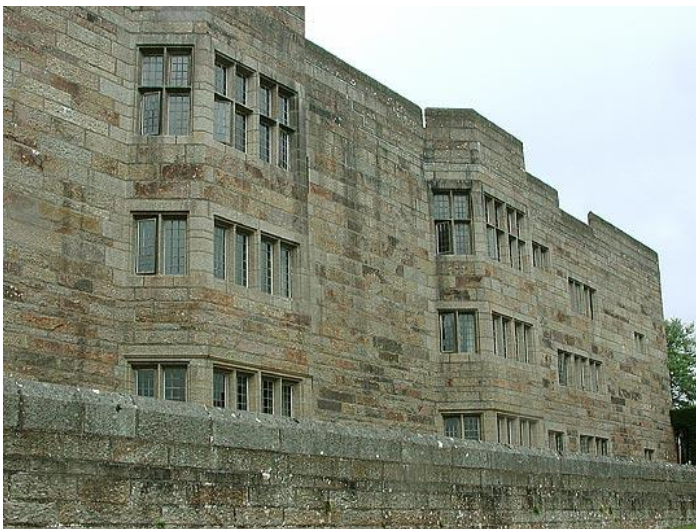
The 'Housing Provision for Older People in Hampshire' (2009) report concludes that:

*(7.33) 'Demand for care home places for older people is projected to grow in Hampshire by around 6,500 places (73%) by 2026, an average of 325 places a year over the 20 year period.'*

## Proposed Extension

Sited on the very edge of the urban area the new building takes as its precedents the existing buildings on the site and from the landscape beyond. The design seeks a sensitive response to the original building's Grade II listed status and to its position on a hill overlooking a rural area. The proposal is to build a new wing sited to the north of the existing buildings on falling ground within the existing tree screen. The proposed building is connected to the existing by a footpath link which enables it to merge into the landscape and identity the connection with the original house. Placed here it also forms an intimate central garden between itself and the existing buildings without creating a fully enclosed courtyard. It takes its plan form from the contours as they curve through the site, so as to further embed it in the landscape.

The new proposal suggests an extension for EMI (Elderly Mentally Infirm) patients, which will cover the need that has been identified in the local area. It will ensure minimal impact on the neighbouring properties as it is well screened by mature trees which will not be affected by the scheme (see below). There are no properties to the north. Additional planting will be proposed along the western boundary to ensure that the detached house to the west will have an obscured view of and will not be overlooked by, the new development.



The proposal has been designed using the precedent of the existing buildings, and other existing purpose-designed residential castles such as Castle Drogo in Devon (see left). This is a modern façade but one that pays utmost respect to the Gothic style without being pastiche. The facing material to this elevation is likewise of mass masonry, a solid thick brick curtain whose depth is revealed by the regular unadorned openings that are punched through it. The

proposed half octagonal stairwell tower relates to the existing building, being an echo of its forms and style as well as a direct visual link with the opposing entrance tower of the 1980s wing. This vertical element breaks up the sweep of the brick façade and marks the entrance.

The north elevation offers a very different design solution in the form of a timber screen. The irregular vertical timber cladding recalls the tree trunks behind which it stands and when viewed from the Havant Gap the building begins to disappear into the wooded hill. Being set out from the wall of the building the screen will create patterns of light and shade that will blend with the wooded areas. Opening panels identify the location of windows and offer control over exposure to weather and access to light.



The two “faces” of the design are linked by the roof structure and terrace above. The terrace structure offers views through the large windows towards the north & south while linking the urban with the natural. By being stepped back from the parapets the roof space floats over and behind each elevation so that the building becomes less dominant in the landscape, allowing the original house to remain the focus on site. The use of materials such as glass for the large window openings, timber for the roof beams, standing seam composite roof and external walls cladding system of the building suggest consistency of materials for each elevation of the proposal, in order to offer a new design which blends harmonically within the environment and respects its surroundings.

## Existing Trees Strategy

Arboricultural consultants CBA Trees have prepared a Tree Survey Report on the existing trees and the likely impact of the proposed development on them. The report concludes that, although the site does contain some significant trees, none of these would be affected by the proposed new development. In total the report identified that the development would result in the “direct loss of [nine] trees” but that “It may however be possible to transplant” some of those trees to “another location on site”. Additionally, the large common beech tree near the original house which is classified as category A1 would remain unaffected by the proposed new structure and could be protected during construction with the methods described in the Tree Survey Report by the arboriculturalist.

The report assesses the quality and condition of the trees that would be affected by development. As six of the trees are of category C1 and several are of only “fair” or “poor” condition the report advises that “Trees 1, 2, 3, 8 and 9 are not worthy of transplanting.” and that “it would be of more benefit to secure new planting of a moderate size” and put in place a “maintenance programme” to ensure their growth. The report continues that “Trees 5 and 7...would not survive transplant” and so they would advise that they too are replaced with new planting. For the remaining trees it states “It may be possible to transplant” trees 4 and 8 rather than replacing them.

The arboriculturalist suggests that the development may be achieved with a programme of tree replacement and some transplanting and by ensuring that the overall number of trees and species of tree on the site is maintained.

## Car and Cycle Parking

The existing Care Home is located on a Local Distributor road served by at least 3 bus routes between Havant and Portsmouth. The site has two existing access points (which will not be altered) serving a tarmac hard-standing and gravel car park, used by staff, visitors and emergency vehicles. Please see the Green Travel Plan for further details.

## Conclusion

Over the past years, the need for additional and larger care homes is increasing, along with the need for elderly people to ensure better living standards. Smaller care homes are closing down all over the country while the number of elderly requiring a care home rises. Life expectancy increases and new regulations require facilities that deliver a higher level of living standards.

Following Havant Borough Council’s Planning Approval for our client’s previous application, PWP Architects has re-designed a scheme that accommodates all the conditions and local planning policy, while reflecting the heritage, architecture and local ecology of the surrounding area, in an attempt to offer back to the community a building which serves and improves the lives of the elderly.

