

PLANNING STATEMENT

**FITZALEN ROAD/CHURCH STREET
LITTLEHAMPTON
PROPOSED EXTRA CARE HOUSING FOR
THE FRAIL ELDERLY
FOR
McCARTHY AND STONE
(ASSISTED LIVING) LTD**



JUNE 2007

Summary

1. This proposal for extra care accommodation for the frail elderly would provide the opportunity for a high quality development that would positively contribute to demonstrable local housing needs in accordance with development plan objectives and Planning Policy Statement 3.
2. The proposed development represents a highly sustainable development, with wide ranging social and planning benefits, both for potential residents and the community as a whole. In summary, these are:

Sustainability Benefits

- A highly sustainable form of development that optimises the use of valuable urban land.
- The provision of much-needed sheltered accommodation that helps address the demographic imperative of an ageing population and the housing stock that is ill equipped to deal with its needs.
- An accessible location and form of development that will lead to less reliance on the private motorcar.
- A development that serves to underpin local facilities, including the retail function of the shops close to the site.
- A land use, which is entirely passive and a "good neighbour".
- A building that provides substantial energy efficiency advantages over most open market schemes.

Balanced View of Policy and Other Material Considerations

- Extra Care housing for the frail elderly provides significant planning and social benefits.
 - Sustainable form of development.
 - Brings underdeveloped "brownfield" land into beneficial use.
 - Maximises use of scarce residential land.
 - Net environmental benefit.
 - Meets a recognised housing need.
 - Helps underpin local facilities.
3. This proposal represents an ideal opportunity for the redevelopment of this urban "previously developed" site in accordance with the Government's housing and sustainable development policies. It would provide for much needed specialised

housing for the frail elderly within a central location, therefore helping to prevent new housing on greenfield land and freeing up existing under-occupied stock.

4. Extra Care housing provides the frail elderly with a better housing choice. It provides residents with safety, security and companionship and removes the heavy burden of property maintenance. Therefore, it reduces the anxieties and worries experienced by many elderly people living in accommodation that does not best suit their needs.
5. The location of this proposal is within easy reach of the town centre with its range of shops, public transport and other essential services, which all would contribute to the residents maintaining an independent lifestyle. This specialised form of housing generates extremely low levels of traffic and the convenience of the location close to public transport opportunities would further reduce the need for car use, not least because purchasers of such housing accommodation generally no longer need or wish to have the 'burden' of car ownership.
6. National, strategic and local planning policies all place strong emphasis on the need to re-cycle previously developed land in order to safeguard Greenfield sites and land in other sensitive areas. The proposed development successfully achieves a balance between the potentially competing objectives of development and the conservation of the environment, and thereby satisfies the goal of "sustainability". They properly maximise the use of this central "brownfield" site without giving rise to any planning problems – in particular, it would not prejudice the living standards of nearby residential premises.
7. This proposal will:
 - Accord with national planning guidance in relation to sustainable development;
 - Accord with the relevant and material provisions of the development plan; and
 - Provide an enhancement of the street scene on this corner site.

Furthermore, there are significant planning merits associated with the proposals, which further sustainability goals.

McCarthy & Stone

8. McCarthy & Stone (Developments) Ltd, was established in 1963. During the past twenty-four years the Company has specialised in the design, construction and management of sheltered accommodation for sale to the elderly and has developed a wealth of experience in this particular sector of the housing market. Extensive research both pre and post occupation has been carried out by the Company, which has led to product and service development. This background has resulted in McCarthy & Stone being widely recognised as the market leader in the provision of sheltered housing for sale to the elderly.
9. By 2005 more than 26,000 specialised dwellings for the elderly had been built on over 600 development sites throughout the United Kingdom. On going and planned developments are likely to increase these figures. McCarthy & Stone has considerable experience of successfully developing a wide variety of sites including town centre locations, infill sites, sites within conservation areas, and extensions to Listed Buildings.

Nature and Concept of "Extra Care"

10. The McCarthy & Stone "Extra Care" product range is aimed at providing independent living for the frail elderly with day to day assistance in the form of domestic help and domiciliary care tailored to owners' individual needs. The basic concept is to provide a barrier free environment entirely wheelchair accessible, from access into the building with gradients no greater than 1 in 20.
11. All corridors, communal areas and the flats themselves are fully wheelchair accessible; bathrooms have level access showers; while kitchens are fully fitted but have the advantage of removable cupboards to allow wheelchair users to adapt the kitchen to their needs. All the features help to defer the time when "one to one" care assistance is needed, and even then there are the obvious economies in scale to be derived by the care services in managing care delivery to the grouped flats. This helps save both time and travel costs.
12. It is intended that the scheme will be self-regulating in the sense that the combination that the value for the additional communal facilities and services (together with the extra costs to the owners of the service charge in having 24 hour staffing, on-site catering and domestic assistance and so on), will deter those who do not need this type of accommodation.

The Need for Specialised Housing for the Frail Elderly

16. The proposed redevelopment of the site for housing for the frail elderly is a significant opportunity to contribute towards meeting the current and projected need for special needs housing for the elderly in Littlehampton and the UK generally.

17. Key findings from the Spring 2003 Issue of 'Population Trends' by National Statistics state that:
 - The UK population is projected to increase gradually from an estimated 58.8 million in 2001 to over 63 million by 2026. This is equivalent to an average annual rate of growth of 0.28%. Longer-term projections suggest the population will peak around 2040 at nearly 64 million and then gradually start to fall.

 - The UK population will gradually become older with the mean age projected to rise from 39.1 years in 2001 to 42.4 years in 2026.

 - By 2007, the population of pensionable age is projected to exceed the number of children.

 - The number of people of state pensionable age is projected to increase by over 10.5% from 10.8 million in 2001 to 12.0 million in 2011. Allowing for the change in women's state pension age, the population of pensionable age will rise only slightly further (to 12.2 million) by 2021. However, a faster increase will then resume with longer-term projections suggesting the number over pensionable age will peak at over 15 million around 2040.

18. Turning now to the District of Arun the demographics highlight the following: -
 - In the 2001 census, 26% of the resident population in Arun were of or over retirement age (65 and over for males or 60 and over for females) slightly greater than the 18.5% average for England and Wales. The figure for the South East of England as a whole was 19%.

19. The above statistics are very useful in determining the demographic make-up of the area in relation to the elderly and for estimating likely demand for specialised housing for the elderly including extra care housing. A report has also been commissioned

from the Elderly Accommodation Counsel to assess the need for such specialised housing in Littlehampton, and this Report forms part of the planning submission

20. It is important that the needs of the elderly are not overlooked, and this is ratified in PPS3. There exists a need now within the district and a likely increase in demand during the future plan period for specialised accommodation for the elderly, in light of the UK's and Arun's ageing population.

National Planning Policy Guidance

21. **Planning Policy Statement 1 (2005)** continues to place "sustainability" at the forefront of national planning policy. The Government recognises the need to provide for an adequate and continuous supply of housing land whilst containing urban sprawl and conserving both the urban and rural environment.
22. **Paragraphs 33-39** of PPS1 deal with matters of high quality design for new development and add that designs which are inappropriate in their context or which fail to take opportunities for improving the quality and character of an area should be resisted.
23. **Paragraph 38** of PPS1, states that;
'Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.'
24. **Planning Policy Statement 3** published in November 2006 provides up to date guidance on the delivery of new housing across all types and tenures together with its assimilation into an area

Housing Choice/Homes for the Elderly

25. PPS3 (November 2006) seeks, amongst other matters; to achieve a wide choice of high quality homes in all sectors of the market (**Paragraph 9**) and also seeks a wide variety of housing (**Paragraph 10**). **Paragraph 20** of this document identifies that communities should be made up of a mix of different households including older people.
26. In advising local planning authorities on how to plan for the mix of housing within their areas, **Paragraph 21** of the document identifies that authorities should have

particular regard to *"the current and future demographic trends"* and also *"older and disabled people"*.

27. In this respect, **Paragraph 23** clearly identifies that developers should bring forward proposals for market housing which *"reflects demand and a profile of households requiring market housing"* in order to sustain mixed communities. In assessing an appropriate level of housing, **Paragraph 33** advises that local planning authorities should take a number of matters into account, including *"evidence of current and future levels of need and demand for housing"*.

Design

28. PPS3 expands upon those matters of improving design quality previously identified in PPS1, which relates to the provision of high quality housing. **Paragraph 16** identifies a number of matters, which should be considered in respect of such assessments. In terms of assessing and enhancing character and quality of an area, **Paragraph 50** identifies that the density of existing development on site should not dictate that of new housing by stifling change or requiring replication of an existing style or form.

Efficient Use of Land

29. PPS3 continues in the vein of PPG3 by seeking efficient use of previously developed land in sustainable locations. There can be no doubt that the site proposed is previously developed land in a sustainable location which policy supports should be used in an efficient and effective manner.
30. **Planning Policy Guidance Note 13** (March 2001) further emphasises the need to promote more sustainable development by again strongly promoting the re-use of previously developed land, particularly for housing; increased housing densities; and reduced reliance on the car – particularly where sites are centrally located and/or well served by public transport.

Development Plan Policy Framework

31. The Development Plan comprises the Regional Planning Guidance 9, the West Sussex Structure Plan 1993 which covers the period up to 2006 and the Arun District Local Plan adopted in 2003.

Regional Planning Policy 9 South East

32. **Regional Planning Policy 9** (March 2001) now has the status of Regional Spatial Strategy and focuses on making better use of the urban area with a strong emphasis for new housing provision. In terms of meeting housing needs generally, the regional strategy is for a concentrated pattern of development with a strong emphasis on new dwelling provision in the existing urban area.
33. **RPG9** promotes an "Urban Renaissance" and calls for a "sequential approach" to housing development, giving priority to previously developed land and encouraging development at higher densities in existing residential areas.
34. **Policy Q3** requires that new development, (in particular housing), should make more efficient use of land throughout the Region, whilst **Policy H5** requires that full use should be made of the opportunities for increasing housing developments within urban areas.
35. **Policy H4** seeks a range of dwelling types and sizes to be provided throughout the Region in order to meet the needs of all sectors of the community including for the elderly (criterion a (i)).

The West Sussex Structure Plan (2004)

36. **The West Sussex Structure Plan 2001-2016** was adopted in 2004. This document sets out the broad strategy for development within West Sussex.
37. The strategy set out in the structure plan is to locate development within existing urban areas wherever possible (**LOC1**). **Policy NE2** recognises the need to achieve a mix of housing types, including the need to accommodate the small dwellings and also addressing specific groups, including the elderly.
38. Policies also recognise that developments sited in accessible locations will also be of assistance in reducing dependency upon the private motor car and that walking and other means of transport also need to be encouraged (**Policies DEV4 and DEV5**).

Arun District Local Plan 2003

39. The Arun District Local plan was adopted in April 2003, as is the relevant Local Plan for development control purposes. The key policies of the adopted Local Plan are briefly set out below.

ARUN DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN 2003	
Policies GEN1 Sustainability; GEN 2 Built up Area Boundary; GEN 4 Location and Travel Demand	
<i>The above policies seek to limit development to identified settlements and to promote the concept of sustainable development. (Author's summary)</i>	The site is within a defined settlement and is a "windfall" site close to Littlehampton. The proposal would result in a sustainable form of development in itself and one, which would require limited dependence on the use of the private motor car.
Policy GEN 5 Provision of New Residential Development; Policy DEV 21 Accommodation Restricted to Occupation by the Elderly	
<p><i>The Plan (Policy GEN 5) makes provision for 8,700 new dwellings during the Plan period 1996-2011. Net densities of at least 30 units per hectare are expected.</i></p> <p><i>Policy DEV 21 recognises that sheltered accommodation is a specific housing need, which needs to be addressed. (Author's summary)</i></p>	<p>The site is not allocated for residential development; it is however a "brownfield" site within a defined settlement and constitutes a windfall opportunity, which as advocated by PPS3 should be developed efficiently. This is achieved in a manner, which respects and enhances its townscape context.</p> <p>The "age occupancy" restriction suggested by the Policy, although not strictly necessary due to the applicant's lease arrangements, is acceptable to the applicant.</p>

Policy GEN 7 The Form of New Development

Planning permission will only be granted for schemes displaying high quality design and layout. Development proposals involving new buildings or significant extensions or alterations must be accompanied by an illustrated written analysis of the site and its immediate setting, together with its relationship with the relevant townscape, landscape, wildlife and movement characteristics of the wider area. Development will be permitted subject to meeting a range of criteria (8 in total). (Author's summary)

The scheme has evolved via a full townscape/analysis appraisal and this is set out in the accompanying design statement. The proposal has been designed by an experienced and qualified Architect, with particular regard to the constraints and opportunities presented by the site and its surroundings. The proposal relates satisfactorily in terms of its form and scale to existing development in the area both generally and in relation to the townscape of the immediate locality.

The proposal has been designed with regard to national, regional and local plan policies which seek to encourage the efficient use of available brownfield land for residential development, especially where it provides accommodation for small households, particularly for the elderly at densities commensurate with environmental considerations.

A full consultation exercise in accord with PPS1 has also been undertaken

The site is well located in relation to Littlehampton and the services which they offer. The proposed development would provide a safe and secure retirement for the intended frail elderly residents..

Policy GEN 9 Foul and Surface Water Drainage

The policy seeks to ensure that developments do not give rise to drainage or flooding problems on or off site and where such issues are identified that appropriate mitigation measures form part of all proposals. (Author's summary)

The proposed development would be appropriately drained. If possible, it is intended to use soak aways but this is a matter, which will be more fully assessed following site investigations.

Policy GEN 12 Parking in New Development	
<p><i>The LPA will base its consideration of the need for on-site provision on its parking standards contained within this Plan. Provision of parking in excess of these standards will not be allowed.</i></p> <p><i>The policy goes on to advise that the LPA may seek a lower provision in town centres and other areas accessible by other means of transport subject to a number of criteria (7). (Author's summary);</i></p>	<p>The applicant has substantial experience in ensuring that the level of parking provision is appropriate to the level of car ownership prevalent within specialised schemes for the frail elderly. In view of the applicant's considerable experience in this field, it is considered that the parking provision proposed of 23 spaces is appropriate. .</p>

40. This proposal represents an ideal opportunity for the full residential redevelopment of this site in accordance with the Government's housing and sustainable development policies.
41. It would provide for much needed housing for the frail elderly within a sustainable, location, therefore helping to prevent new housing on greenfield land and freeing up existing under-occupied stock. The increased residential presence will support and enhance the viability and sustainability of the local economy.

Design and Access Statement

42. The Applicant has undertaken a contextual analysis of the area and consequently prepared a Design and Access Statement in accordance with the guidance contained within Planning Policy Statement 1 'Delivering Sustainable Development'. The Design and Access Statement analyses the constraints and opportunities of the site the design solution employed and also the impact of the scheme upon surrounding buildings.

Impact on Neighbouring Properties

43. The impact of the proposal on the occupiers of neighbouring properties has been carefully considered as part of the proposed development, equally it is important to consider the guidance provided in **The Planning System: General Principles**, which in paragraph 29 advises that the planning system does not exist to protect the private interests of one person against the activities of another. In assessing the impact of development upon neighbouring properties this guidance advises: -

".....but whether the proposal would unacceptably affect amenities and the existing use of land and buildings which ought to be protected in the public interest." (my emphasis)

Fitzalan Road

44. There are two properties which adjoin the site on the Fitzalan Road. The property immediately adjacent is Fitzalan House, utilised as a veterinary surgery, and it is a substantial 2-storey building which fills the plot frontage with hard-standing used a car parking to the front. It is understood that the property is used solely for business purposes and therefore there would be no impact upon residential amenity.
45. The property next door, no. 30, is also 2-storey with a substantial private garden and a distance of over 40 metres would be provided between habitable room windows in no. 30 (rear elevation) and the scheme itself. The proposed development reduces to 2-storeys towards the rear of the site (in close proximity to no. 30) and as a result there would be no over-bearing impact or loss of any sunlight or daylight. The garden of no. 30 would adjoin an area of communal garden area and therefore there would be no detrimental noise impact upon the residential amenities of this property.
46. Opposite the site in Fitzallen Road is the former hospital which is currently being redeveloped.

Church Street

47. No's 37, 39, 41 & 43 Church Street would lie opposite to the proposed development with a distance of 40 metres provided between proposed and existing buildings. In addition this would be a "front to front" relationship across a busy public realm and no loss of residential amenity would result.

48. Immediately adjacent to the site is no. 18 Church Street which is a 2-storey dwelling house, with limited windows in its side elevation. A distance of 15 metres would be provided between the side of no. 18 and the 3-storey element of the proposed development.
49. The development reduces to 2-storeys in height where it faces the rear curtilage of no. 18 and a distance of 13 metres is provided. In order to avoid any disturbance from the proposed access-way along the curtilage of no. 18 a significant landscape buffer is also included. The rear-most part of the garden of no. 18 Church Street also adjoins the site. However any building would be located some considerable distance from this garden. The car parking and turning area is located some 3 metres from the boundary of the garden of no. 18 which will again allow a substantial landscape buffer to be provided.
50. It is concluded therefore that there would be no unacceptable loss of residential amenity to any of the properties surrounding the application site.

Car Parking

51. This is a site sustainable site within Littlehampton as it lies close to the centre of the town. McCarthy & Stone has unsurpassed experience in providing for the car parking needs of its specialised housing developments. Specialised housing for the frail elderly, because of its very nature and concept, is invariably located within reasonable walking distance of shops and other essential services and close to public transport facilities. It can therefore be predicted that the level of car parking proposed, given the age and frailty of the intended elderly residents will adequately supply sufficient parking for residents, staff and visitors.
52. It should also be noted that the parking provision is supplemented by the provision of a battery car store, suitable for the intended residents, and providing access to alternative forms of transport.

Amenity Space

53. From McCarthy & Stone's considerable experience the most important amenity space for the frail elderly residents is not in fact outside the building but is the resident's lounge and other communal facilities contained within the building. The Company employs a professionally qualified Landscape Architect and prides itself

on the quality of its landscaped treatment, which has become a "hallmark" of all McCarthy & Stone sheltered housing schemes.

54. Residents of extra care housing tend to spend considerable time in their homes, it is appropriate that wherever possible, lively or interesting views or pleasant and peaceful scenery, should be visible from the principle habitable rooms. Often the most favoured apartments are those on the busiest road frontage or those facing the main entrance and car parking area serving the development. To this end, the development is well-presented by areas of soft landscaping on all aspects.



View 1 Typical Landscaping Layout

55. Given the experience of McCarthy and Stone in this form of housing, it is considered that the requirement for large areas of amenity space would generally be unused and as such would constitute a waste of a valuable resource. Such a waste of resources would of course be totally at odds with Government policy that seeks the efficient and effective use of sustainable located previously developed land.

Conclusion

56. This proposal represents an ideal opportunity for the beneficial redevelopment of this previously developed site close to amenities with a well designed development which would provide for much needed "frail elderly" housing helping to meet an identified specialised housing need of the Borough.

57. Turning to such environmental considerations the scheme proposed would result in a high quality building, which has given careful consideration to the character of the area and the distinctive features within it, and the amenities of neighbouring properties. The proposal represents a positive, coherent and comprehensive development, which properly addresses the site and responds to its townscape context in accordance with PPS1.