



**Horsham
District
Council**

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT

TO: Development Management Committee (South)

BY: Development Manager

DATE: 18 October 2016

DEVELOPMENT: Construction of dementia care home for 32 residents to replace existing dementia annex of nursing care home.

SITE: Homelands Nursing Home Horsham Road Cowfold Horsham

WARD: Cowfold, Shermanbury and West Grinstead

APPLICATION: DC/16/0543

APPLICANT: Medicrest Limited

REASON FOR INCLUSION ON THE AGENDA: The application, if approved, would represent a departure from the adopted Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: To refuse planning permission

1. THE PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To consider the planning application.

DESCRIPTION OF THE APPLICATION

- 1.1 The application seeks full planning permission for a new dementia care home within the grounds of the existing Homelands Nursing Home, which is located approximately 1km to the north of Cowfold. The proposed development would include the demolition of the existing 'Annex' building which is currently used as a specialist dementia care unit catering for 15 residents with dementia and behavioural problems. The application seeks permission for a new, purpose-built dementia care facility to increase the number of residents that can be accommodated from 15 to 32. The facility would be 2-storeys (11m) in height and would have 32x individual en-suite rooms. The building would include communal facilities on the ground floor including 2x lounges/day rooms, an activity/sensory room, kitchen/dining facilities and enclosed outdoor space. A new service road and parking is also proposed.
- 1.2 The proposed dementia care home would be sited within the grounds of the existing Homelands Nursing Home, opposite the existing care home (a converted manor house) and directly to the east of the existing Annex building which currently houses the dementia care unit for 15 residents. The existing Annex would continue to be used throughout construction of the new facility to avoid displacement of the residents, and would be demolished upon completion of the new building.

ITEM A02 - 2

- 1.3 The proposed building would measure approximately 11m in height, and would consist of 2-storeys of accommodation with a partial-basement which would utilise the slope of the land on the north-west elevation. The partial basement space would be used for a staff room, laundry room and boiler room and would allow for direct access to the service road. The external appearance of the building is proposed to consist of facing brickwork and render combined with blue/grey fibre cement weatherboarding and slate grey concrete tiles. The building would be a largely rectangular shape with hipped roofs, and would include 2 x conservatories – one on the east elevation to provide a light and spacious dining room, and one on the south (front) elevation to provide a day room for residents. The building would have relatively large uPVC windows on all elevations positioned in a regular fashion to serve all bedrooms and day rooms.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

- 1.4 Homelands Nursing Home is an existing nursing care facility accommodating 35 residents in the main facility (a converted manor house), and 15 residents in the converted Annex building which is used for specialist care and treatment for patients with dementia care needs.
- 1.5 Homelands is set in 11 acres of grounds approximately 1km to the north of the village of Cowfold, with direct access from the A281 which runs to the east of the site. The site is located outside the Built-up Area Boundary (BUAB) of Cowfold, therefore is located within the countryside where local and national countryside planning policy are relevant. The site shares a vehicular access point from the A281 with 5x private residential properties which are located to the west of the application site via a private driveway. The hard-surfaced single-track access road runs in an east-west direction of approximately 150m from the A281 to the application site and allows for access to the nursing home buildings and the residential dwellings beyond.
- 1.6 The site is relatively self-contained, and the boundary to the north and east are well screened by tall trees and other dense vegetation. Open fields and countryside form the land use beyond the site. The High Weald AONB is located approximately 1km to the east of the application site.

2. INTRODUCTION

STATUTORY BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

Section 6 – Delivering a wide choice of high-quality homes

Section 7 – Requiring good design

Section 8 – Promoting healthy communities

Section 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICY

Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF)

Policy 1 – Sustainable Development

Policy 2 – Strategic Development

Policy 3 – Development Hierarchy

Policy 4 – Settlement Expansion

Policy 9 – Employment Development

ITEM A02 - 3

Policy 10 – Rural Economic Development
Policy 18 – Retirement Housing and Specialist Care
Policy 24 – Environmental Protection
Policy 25 – The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 – Countryside Protection
Policy 27 – Settlement Coalescence
Policy 32 – The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 – Development Principles
Policy 35 – Climate Change
Policy 36 – Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 37 – Sustainable Construction
Policy 40 – Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 – Parking
Policy 42 – Inclusive Communities

RELEVANT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Cowfold Parish Council was designated as a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area in May 2016. Given the early stages in the process, the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan cannot form part of the consideration of this application at this time.

PLANNING HISTORY

DC/11/2630	To form and construct 2 additional dormers on South rear elevation of main building	Application Permitted 24.01.2012
DC/12/0832	Proposed 3-storey extension to existing nursing home, rear conservatory, new vehicular access, car park & bunds	Application Refused 19.07.2012
DC/13/1325	Demolition of part two storey and single storey building and replacement with two storey extension with rear conservatory	Application Permitted 25.09.2013

3. OUTCOME OF CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk.

INTERNAL CONSULTATIONS

3.2 **Landscape Architect**

Comment. The Council's consultant Landscape Architect was consulted with regard to the information initially submitted with this application. No objection was made in their response of 09 May 2016, but a list of conditions was recommended to ensure sufficient information is submitted and approved. This included:

- a landscape and visual impact appraisal (to better understand the effects the development will have on its surroundings);
- a tree survey (to include root protection areas, proposed trees for removal, proposed trees to be planted, tree protection strategy, tree pit details);
- details of all hard landscaping including materials proposed;
- details of all soft landscaping to include a schedule of proposed plants and a specification of planting methods;

ITEM A02 - 4

- a maintenance and management plan for all landscaped areas;
- an ecological survey was recommended.

A second consultation was requested from the Landscape Architect after the submission of further information by the applicant. The advice of 16 September 2016 notes that in order to better understand the landscape proposals for the site and to enable determination of the application, a list of further information should be submitted, including:

- A short landscape and visual appraisal;
- Arboricultural Statement/Tree Survey;
- A utilities/services plan to show positions of service trenches/soakaways;
- Details of hard landscaping;
- A written specification of proposed planting methods;
- Tree pit details;
- Landscape management plan.

3.3 **Environment Management/Waste Collections**

Comment. The Council's Waste Collections team provided a specification of the size and type of bins that would be required on this site, as well as the type of storage facilities that would be required for these bins. A specification of the Council's waste collections vehicle was also provided in the consultation response, with details of the requirements for vehicle manoeuvrability around the site.

3.4 **Strategic Planning**

Objection. The Council's Strategic Planning department note that the proposal is located outside the built up area boundary, and as such, given the scale and activity of the proposed development, would conflict with Policy 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF). Strategic Planning also note that Policy 18 of the HDPF applies to Retirement Housing and Specialist Care which supports development and extensions of these facilities, however they should be in sustainable locations within built up area boundaries.

3.5 **Drainage Engineer**

Comment. 'The submitted information does not provide sufficient drainage evidence to make any reasonable comment or observation. Therefore until detailed design information has been submitted at the appropriate planning stage, drainage conditions should be applied'.

3.6 **Environmental Health**

Comment. 'There is no detail included within the application on the intended ventilation extraction system serving the new kitchen. Full details must be provided to this Authority, and must be approved in writing before installation. This department objects to the application due to insufficient information on the extract ventilation system'.

OUTSIDE AGENCIES

3.7 **WSCC Highways**

No objection. Consultation with WSCC Highways was originally made in April 2016 where their response highlighted several deficiencies in the information submitted with the application. Having submitted further information, WSCC were re-consulted in August 2016 and note that they are now satisfied with this approach and raise no objection to the proposed development.

3.8 **WSCC Flood Risk Management**

No objection (subject to conditions). 'Current mapping shows that the proposed site is at 'Low' risk from surface water flooding. The one page FRA included with this application lacks detail but proposes that, infiltration would be the primary method used to restrict the

ITEM A02 - 5

run off from the development. There are no further details or information to make further comment at the current time.

Development should not commence until finalised detailed surface water drainage designs and calculations for the site, based on sustainable drainage principles, for the development have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The drainage designs should demonstrate that the surface water runoff generated up to and including the 100 year, plus 30% for climate change, critical storm will not exceed the runoff from the current site following the corresponding rainfall event.

Development shall not commence until full details of the maintenance and management of the SUDs system is set out in a site-specific maintenance manual and submitted to, and approved in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall subsequently be implemented in accordance with the approved designs'.

PUBLIC CONSULTATIONS

3.9 **Cowfold Parish Council**

No objections or observations

3.10 **1x Letter in Support**

Comments in support of the proposal include the following points:

- 'In principle we fully support this well thought out application'.
- The conservatory to the south elevation should be relocated to the south east corner, to make it larger, provide better views, and provide more privacy for the residents.
- Due to the increase in construction traffic, it should be a planning condition that the proposed improvements to the entrance and road, as granted under application DC13/1325, be completed before the commencement of any building works.
- The crash map data only goes up to 2011, more up to date data should be examined, say 2011 - 2016.

4. HOW THE PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION WILL PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS

4.1 Article 8 (Right to respect of a Private and Family Life) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (Protection of Property) of the Human Rights Act 1998 are relevant to this application, Consideration of Human rights forms part of the planning assessment below.

5. HOW THE PROPOSAL WILL HELP TO REDUCE CRIME AND DISORDER

5.1 It is not considered that the development would be likely to have any significant impact on crime and disorder.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENTS

6.1 The main considerations in the determination of this application are: the principle of the proposed development in this location; the appropriateness of the proposed design of the development; the potential for impact upon the character of the surrounding area and landscape; any impacts upon nearby residents; access and parking considerations; and drainage, ventilation and energy usage.

Principle of the Development

6.2 The overarching strategy for development in the Horsham District is outlined within the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) which was formally adopted by the Council

ITEM A02 - 6

in November 2015. Policy 3 of the HDPF presents the District's settlement hierarchy which seeks to steer development to the most sustainable locations. New development in the District should be focused in the larger settlements of Horsham, Southwater and Billingshurst; with limited development in the District's smaller settlements. Outside the District's 'Built-up Area Boundaries' (BUAB) development is normally resisted, and expansion of existing settlements in order to meet identified local housing, employment and community needs will only be acceptable where it is allocated as part of the adopted development plan which would include the HDPF and any 'made' Neighbourhood Development Plans (Policy 4: Settlement Expansion).

- 6.3 The application site is located outside any of the District's defined BUAB's, and is therefore located in the countryside where Policy 26 of the HDPF seeks to restrict inappropriate development. Policy 26 allows development where it is considered to be essential to its countryside location, and where it meets at least one of 4 additional criteria. Policy 26 also requires that proposals are of a scale appropriate to its countryside character and location, and must not lead to a significant increase in the overall level of activity in the countryside.
- 6.4 It is acknowledged that there is an established use on this site as an existing care facility, and this proposal seeks to build upon this use to provide further, purpose-built, dementia-care accommodation which the applicant asserts is needed. In support of the application, limited information was initially submitted to justify the need for the proposed dementia-care facility. In a statement from the Director of Medicrest Limited (the applicant), it is noted that there is an increasing demand for good-quality dementia care in purpose built units to cater for the needs of increasing numbers of older people who suffer from dementia. The statement points to the West Sussex County Council Dementia Framework (2014-2019) which anticipates an increased need by 1/3 for care home placements for older people with severe dementia over the next 6 years. The applicant states that this facility would be a *'valuable and desperately needed service for the local community'*. The applicant's submitted Design and Access Statement states that the existing premises are not considered suitable for further expansion, therefore requiring the new building. The applicant states that there is an increasing need in West Sussex for good-quality dementia care and the existing facility at Homelands is unable to provide sufficient accommodation to meet the required standards and need. Having reviewed this information, Officers requested that the applicant provides more substantive evidence to demonstrate that there is a clear need for dementia care facilities - specifically in the Horsham district. The applicant provided supplementary (but limited, and un-evidenced) information in July 2016 to justify the local need for this facility, stating that the facility at Homelands is *'constantly full and demand is ongoing'*. The applicant also notes that *'Karen Wells of WSCC 'Director of Care' stated last year that the demand for dementia specialist services is well documented as is the need for quality services for people in later life – that position has not changed at today's date'*.
- 6.5 The justification provided for the development in terms of local need is considered to be limited and anecdotal; and is unsupported by any recent evidence or up-to-date research. The West Sussex County Council Dementia Framework (2014-2019) does provide some commentary on the increase of dementia-care needs in West Sussex, but the document mainly focuses on the recognition, prevention and management of the condition rather than a locational strategy for the provision of care facilities to accommodate these patients.
- 6.6 Given the development is proposed outside the built-up area boundary and in a countryside location, the principle of its acceptability must be assessed against the requirements of HDPF Policies 4 (Settlement Expansion) and 26 (Countryside Protection). The proposed development is located in the Parish of Cowfold where a Neighbourhood Development Plan has not yet been progressed in any meaningful way. Therefore, as the site is not allocated for development in either the HDPF or the Cowfold NDP, the proposed development is considered to conflict with Policy 4. In addition, Policy 26 of the HDPF only allows development that is 'essential to its countryside location' and is 'of a scale

ITEM A02 - 7

appropriate to its countryside character and location'. Whilst it is acknowledged that there is likely to be an increasing need for specialist dementia care across the country as a whole, it is considered that the applicant has failed to satisfactorily demonstrate that there is a specific need for this accommodation in the Horsham District. In addition, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the proposed development is specifically required in the location proposed, and that it is 'essential to its countryside location' as required by Policy 26. No evidence has been submitted to indicate that such a facility could not be provided within a BUAB within the District, or that the facility would likely accommodate those in need of specialist care from Horsham District rather than addressing a potential need for such accommodation arising from outside the District.

- 6.7 Policy 18 of the HDPF (Retirement Housing and Specialist Care) is also relevant to this application. Policy 18 supports development for specialist care housing where it is accessible by foot or public transport to local shops, services, community facilities and the wider public transport network. Given the location of this development, it is not considered to be easily accessible by foot to any local services due to the distance and nature of the relatively rural single-carriageway road (A281) which is not pedestrian friendly. There is a bus that passes the entrance to the development that runs from Horsham to Brighton via Cowfold (No 17). The northbound bus stop is located at the entrance of the site. This service runs approximately every 30 minutes (Monday-Saturday) and once every 2 hours on Sundays and Public Holidays. Notwithstanding the No17 bus route that passes the site, as well as the site's relative proximity to the A281, it is not considered that the proposed development meets the requirements of Policy 18 in terms of its sustainability and accessibility to local facilities. Whilst it is noted that residents of such a facility would be unlikely to travel independently, the site is not sustainably located in terms of its accessibility for visitors or staff.
- 6.8 On balance, whilst there *may* be a need for specialist, purpose-built dementia-care facilities in the Horsham District, this need is not considered to have been satisfactorily demonstrated by the applicant, particularly with consideration to the proposed location of development which is in a less-sustainable countryside setting where development is more strictly controlled. The principle of the development in this location is therefore considered to be unacceptable and conflicts with Policies 4, 18 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF).

Design of the Proposal

- 6.9 Notwithstanding the above regarding the principle of the development, Officers also have concern with the proposed external design and appearance of the development particularly given its siting in a sensitive, countryside location. National and local planning policy places a great emphasis on design and the quality of development and seeks to ensure that the design of any new development is appropriate to its setting. Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains the great importance the Government attaches to the design of the built environment, noting that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, and should contribute positively to making places better for people. NPPF paragraph 64 states that permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. The policies of the NPPF are echoed in the HDPF within Policy 32 (The Quality of New Development) and Policy 33 (Development Principles).
- 6.10 It is acknowledged that the proposed building has been designed to be highly functional in order to satisfy standards and requirements of a purpose-built dementia care facility. In this regard, the internal layout and design of the building is considered to be well thought out and appropriate in terms of its functionality for the patients that it would serve. Statements submitted from the applicant and a registered Occupational Therapist support the proposed layout and design of the facility and note that the accommodation and communal facilities

that would be provided are highly appropriate and would meet the needs of the proposed end user. Features such as wide corridors, well-lit spaces, logical layouts, large windows, sign-posting, spacious communal spaces, and individual well-equipped rooms have been included and are considered appropriate for this type of facility.

- 6.11 However, the functionality of the internal design and layout is considered to have compromised the external design and appearance of the building which is considered to be poor, and not characteristic or complementary to its Sussex countryside surroundings. The applicant submitted a Design and Access Statement and a 'Designer's Statement' in support of the proposal which provides a short description of the appearance of the proposed building, and the design considerations. Officers consider this information to be lacking in detail and requested that the applicant reconsiders the external design taking into account characteristic features from surrounding buildings, including in particular the nearby main care home building which the new development would sit opposite. Supplementary information was submitted by the applicant to demonstrate why they consider the design as presented to be appropriate. Examples of several surrounding buildings and structures were provided, with brief descriptions of the design features of some of these buildings, however - it is noted that these design details are lacking in the proposed building. Despite raising these concerns with the applicant, no reconsideration of the design and external appearance of the proposed building has been provided and the design remains as submitted originally.
- 6.12 Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF incorporate principles set nationally in the NPPF, and seek to ensure that all new development in the district is of a high quality, and complements the locally distinctive character of the district. Policy 33 requires the character of new development to be locally distinctive; to respect the character of the surrounding area; and to use high standards of building materials and finishes. The external design of the proposed care home building is not considered to have been well thought out, and little attempt has been made to consider and incorporate locally distinctive design features and materials as per the requirements of Policies 32 and 33. It is appreciated that this building is purpose-built for a very specific clinical purpose (therefore requiring a carefully designed interior); but this does not mean that the exterior cannot be designed to complement the character of its surroundings. The shape and footprint of the building is very linear and formal, and has no features of interest (such as dormer windows, chimneys, gable ends, traditional materials etc). It is considered that the proposed building has been designed merely as a box to accommodate the internal facilities with little regard to the external design or local vernacular. Given the rural countryside location, and close proximity to the existing converted care home building opposite, it is not considered that the design accords with the requirements of HDPF Policies 32 and 33. In addition, with the lack of justification of need as already explored, the scale of the building in terms of its footprint is considered to be inappropriate for its countryside location and not in accordance with HDPF Policy 26.

Landscaping and character of the surrounding area

- 6.13 It is acknowledged that the site is not restricted by any formal landscape designations, but is approximately 800m from the edge of the High Weald AONB and within approximately 400m of some pockets of Ancient Woodland. The main consideration in terms of the impact of this development on the surrounding landscape is the location of the site in a countryside setting which is not connected to any defined built up area of the district. For this reason, the impact of development on the surrounding landscape is more sensitive and its appropriateness must be carefully considered. HDPF Policy 25 (The Natural Environment and Landscape Character) seeks to ensure that the landscape character of the district will be protected against inappropriate development. Given the majority of the wider site is enclosed by trees and vegetation at its boundaries, it is not thought that the proposed scheme would have a significantly detrimental impact on the surrounding landscape or neighbouring amenity; however, given the sensitivities of the rural location

ITEM A02 - 9

and the scale of the development proposed, more information is required to fully understand this potential impact.

- 6.14 Part of the proposed development is to incorporate a landscaping scheme, to include a safe and enclosed garden area for the residents to enjoy. This scheme would utilise the currently overgrown and neglected low-walled garden structure which would form a central feature bed in the new garden space. It is considered that the enclosed nature of the outdoor space on the east elevation of the building is appropriate in principle, and would provide a safe and useable space for the residents which includes features such as movable raised garden beds, rubber surfacing, ramps, hand rails and limited steps. It is also considered that in principle, the proposed service access road on the west elevation is acceptable, and would allow service delivery vehicles and refuse collections to access the rear of the site without encroaching further into the curtilage of the site or the landscape beyond.
- 6.15 However, there are specific details of the landscaping scheme that are lacking or missing from the application that are considered necessary to fully assess the appropriateness of the proposal. To demonstrate what the proposed perimeter fencing and planting would look like in the context of the whole development; elevation drawings are required for all sides of the site. Only one landscape elevation drawing has been submitted (the south elevation) therefore officers are unable to determine the suitability of the landscaping scheme as a whole in accordance with HDPF Policy 25. In addition, by advice from the consultant Landscape Architect, other information is required to fully assess the landscaping scheme including a landscape and visual impact appraisal to highlight any possible views of the new building from the surrounding landscape; an arboricultural Statement/tree survey to clearly show the condition of the trees on site, tree pit details, and the trees that are proposed to be removed and/or replanted; full details of proposed hard landscaping; an ecological survey; a written specification of proposed planting methods; and a long term landscape management plan. Whilst it would be preferable if more information with regard to landscaping needs were submitted upfront to enable Officers to appropriately assess the scheme in relation to the proposed building, and to determine whether the requirements of HDPF Policy 25 have been met, these requirements could be secured by condition if the application were to be approved and therefore it is considered that it would not be appropriate to refuse planning permission on this basis.

Impacts on nearby residents

- 6.16 The nearest dwelling to the proposed development is located approximately 50m to the west of the application site (Brookfield), and there are 3 other properties sited within a 100m radius to the west of the site. The boundary between the application site and Brookfield is defined by relatively high and dense hedging. The roofline of the single-storey pitched-roofed dwelling of Brookfield can be seen from the application site, but the distance that would be between the two structures is considered to be far enough to ensure no significant harm would result on the amenity of the neighbouring residents at Brookfield or beyond. Given the traffic that would be associated with the dementia care home would turn off to park before reaching the entrance to these nearby dwellings (which are sited further down the driveway), it is not considered that vehicular traffic would result in significantly adverse impacts on the neighbouring residents in terms of noise, emissions or blockages.

Access / Parking

- 6.17 Access to the site is proposed from the existing access point from the A281 which would be shared with the existing care home and residents of the 5 x residential properties to the west of the application site. WSCC Highways were consulted with regard to this proposed arrangement and after some initial concerns and the submission of further information from the applicant, the County Council, as Local Highway Authority, are now satisfied with the

ITEM A02 - 10

access arrangements and raise no objection to the proposed development in highways terms.

- 6.18 A parking plan has been submitted to support the application which proposes 28 parking spaces across the entire site (which includes the existing care home of 35 residents and the proposed dementia care facility of 32 residents). This level of car parking accords with the WSCC parking standards for care homes, therefore the amount of car parking spaces proposed is considered acceptable.
- 6.19 The proposed parking is sited in 2 main locations – car park 1 is located near the main access driveway and consists of 10x spaces plus 3x disabled bays. Car park 2 is located opposite the existing Annex building and consists of 14x spaces and 1x disabled bay. There would also be restricted parking for 4x vehicles near the entrance of the proposed dementia care facility which would be constructed after the demolition of the existing Annex building. These would be for the facility manager and visiting doctor/healthcare professionals and are provided in addition to those that are required by the standards. A drop-off bay is also proposed at the entrance of the proposed facility.

Other Considerations – Drainage, Renewable Energy, Ventilation

- 6.20 It is considered that the following areas are currently lacking in detail, but may be overcome by the addition of pre-commencement planning conditions had the proposed development been considered to be otherwise acceptable.
- 6.21 Policy 38 of the HDPF requires that new development does not increase flood risk on site or elsewhere and must incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) wherever possible, together with appropriate water management measures. The applicant has submitted a short Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) to support the application which identifies that the site is within a 'low risk' flood area (flood zone 1). The Council's specialist Drainage Engineer was consulted with regard to this application, but was unable to offer detailed comment due to a lack of information submitted. The Drainage Engineer has requested that with any recommendation to approve, appropriate drainage conditions are added.
- 6.22 WSCC as the Lead Local Flood Authority were also consulted. They note that the submitted FRA lacks detail other than to suggest that infiltration would be the primary method used to restrict the run off from the development. Accordingly, WSCC recommend several pre-commencement conditions to be added to any recommendation for approval, including the submission of detailed surface water drainage designs and calculations, and that details of the maintenance and management of any SuDS be set out in a site-specific maintenance manual.
- 6.23 It is appropriate for these details to be provided by pre-commencement conditions.
- 6.24 Policy 36 (Appropriate Energy Use) of the HDPF explains how all development will be required to contribute to clean, efficient energy based on the principles of the 'lean, clean, green' hierarchy. All applications for residential or commercial development must include an Energy Statement to demonstrate how the development will comply with the hierarchy. Whilst the proposed development includes the installation of solar panels on the roof, no detail about these has been provided in terms of the contribution it will have to energy use both on site, and/or beyond.
- 6.25 Due to the inclusion within the proposed development of a kitchen facility, the Council's Environmental Health department were consulted. The Environmental Health Officer highlighted the lack of detail submitted with regard to the proposed ventilation extraction system to be installed. Again, whilst it is considered that the preference would be for these details to be submitted up-front to support the full planning application, a pre-

commencement condition for these details would be acceptable as a means of confirming the appropriateness of the ventilation system before development starts.

Summary

6.26 As a whole, details submitted originally with this application were considered to fall short of the requirements to enable Officers to fully assess the proposal and recommend a positive outcome (particularly regarding a full justification of need, design, parking and access and landscaping details). Officers subsequently sought to discuss the shortcomings with the applicant's agent and additional time was agreed between both parties to allow more information and plans to be submitted. Having received further supporting statements and information, some of the issues were resolved (access, parking and some clarification was provided regarding need, design and landscaping). However, there are still considerable outstanding issues with this proposal that result in a recommendation for refusal from Officers. Most importantly, given the location and scale of the proposed facility, it is not considered that the applicant has sufficiently demonstrated and evidenced the need for this development in order to outweigh the impact it would have on the sensitive and less sustainable countryside location. It is also considered that the proposal for the building's external design has not been resolved satisfactorily; thereby also causing harm to the character and appearance of the surrounding area. It is therefore considered that the proposed development would conflict with the requirements of the NPPF and with Policies 1, 2, 4, 26, 32 and 33 of the HDPF.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 To refuse planning permission.

1. The need for additional dementia care facilities in this countryside location, and of the scale proposed, has not been satisfactorily demonstrated or evidenced. No justification has been provided to indicate that the proposed development is required in a countryside location and that it could not be accommodated within a more sustainable location within a designated Built Up Area Boundary. The proposal therefore does not accord with the overarching principles of sustainable development set out within the NPPF and the HDPF. The proposal therefore constitutes an unallocated and unnecessary development in the countryside, contrary to Policies 1, 2, 4 and 26 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) and the requirements of the NPPF.
2. The external design of the proposed building, and the materials proposed to be used, is considered to be poor and not reflective of the local character of the district, particularly the character of its countryside setting outside the Built Up Area Boundary. The proposal has failed to take the opportunities available to create a good quality external appearance, and design of the building is therefore considered to conflict with the principles of good design established in the NPPF, as well as the requirements of Horsham District Planning Framework Policies 32 and 33.