



## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Proposed Change of Use from a House of Multiple Occupation to Residential  
Nursing Home With Associated Renovations and Extensions

at

9 Grove Road, Wrexham, LL11 1DY

June 2021

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## 1.0 Introduction / Background Information

### 1.1 Summary of the Proposals

The Chestnut Healthcare Group is an established care home operator with a good reputation. The group operates four registered care homes that provide a high standard of care for residents with physical or mental healthcare needs set within safe, clean and homely environments. The applicant proposes to convert the existing house of multiple occupation into a care home with new extensions and renovation of the existing property to suit its intended use.

### 1.2 Applicant

Chestnut Healthcare Group

### 1.3 Architect / Agent

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### 1.4 Heritage Consultant

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### 1.5 Arboricultural Consultant

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## 2.0 Site and Context

### 2.1 The Development Site and Location

The application site is located to the north of Wrexham town centre on Grove Road. The tree-lined road is suburban in character with defined front boundaries and properties set back from the road. Land use along Grove Road is split 50/50 between private residential and mixed uses. Private residences predominant at the north-eastern end of Grove Road with a varied mix of a converted office building, a medical centre, a nursing home and Nightingale House Hospice located at the southern end.

The application site itself is relatively level and dominated by a large detached two storey villa that dates from the late Victorian period. The property is set back from the road behind a low capped stone wall with the original gate piers at the entrance. There is a parking area to the front of the house with large garden areas to the side and rear. The house is currently used as a House of Multiple Occupation.

The property is designated as Grade II listed and described as follows:

Roughcast render with smooth rendered quoins, over brick (exposed in rear elevation). Slate roof with scalloped bands. 2 storeys, 2 window range with central entrance hall. Domestic gothic style. L-plan, with tower over entrance in angle. Stepped hood mould to 4-centred arched doorway with datestone above. 4-pane sash window with drop ended hood mould beneath pyramidal roof of tower above. Similar window to left of doorway on each floor. Gable to right, with canted bay window to right, with 2-light window with drop-ended hood mould above. 4-pane sash window on each floor, with hood mould over lower window, to left of entrance. Gabled return faces side garden, with canted bay window to ground floor and 4-pane sash window with drop ended hood moulds above. Similar windows in left hand bay. Continuous string course across principal elevations. Gabled wing of entrance forms service range to rear. Stack on rear of main range and service wing. Interior retains original layout including entrance hall, and main staircase.

The reason for listing is described as 'Part of an important group of late C19 villas which together demonstrate the range of styles in use at the time, and which form an interesting example of urban estate development.'

The site also falls within the Grosvenor Road Conservation Area and the Conservation Area Appraisal (2009) states that 'Grosvenor Road and Grove Road were laid out between 1861 and 1881 as prestigious residential areas for Wrexham's emerging middle class. Each building was individually architecturally designed, the most notable in the form of Italianate villas, and all with careful attention to detail'.



(Fig 1) Aerial Site Location Plan (Red Line - Development Area)



(Fig 2) Existing entrance & frontage



(Fig 3) Existing south west gable



(Fig 4) Rear elevation



(Fig 5) Existing garage building



(Fig 6) Existing garden wall, screened in foliage.

Review of the Natural Resources Wales Flood Maps indicates the development site is not at risk of flooding from either rivers or the sea. There is no risk of surface water flooding either.



(Fig 6) Natural resources Wales flood risk map (Red dot - Development Area)

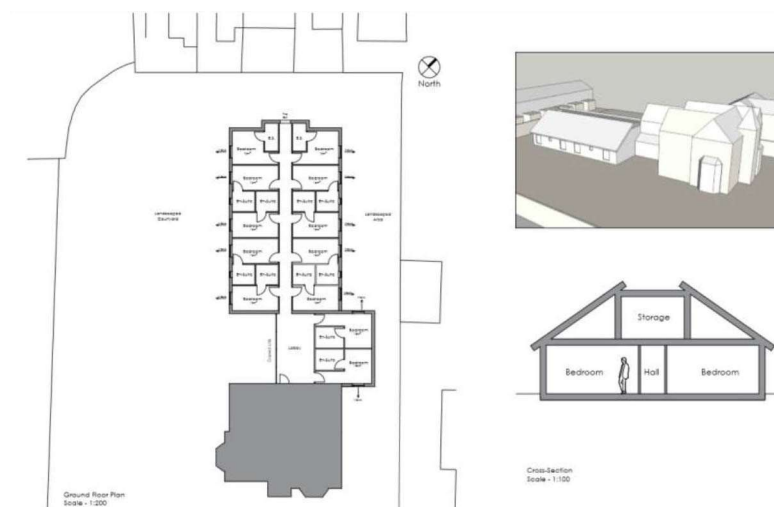
## 3.0 Design Development and Consultation

### 3.1 Initial Consultation

The Conservation Officer was first consulted about the proposed change of use and a potential two-storey extension in 2019. A site visit was arranged where the parameters for any potential development were discussed. The Conservation Officer stated that any extension should not exceed the width of the original house so as not to be visible from the road. It was also agreed that a single-storey extension could be preferable, with the garden relating to its garden context and permitting the building to extend further into the site. The brick garden wall that defines the rear yard area was also considered important and should be retained. A rear window to the stair landing was also identified as important.

### 3.2 Initial Concept Designs

Concept design proposals were developed in accordance with these discussions and submitted to the conservation officer for further review.



(Fig 7) Initial concept designs

Feedback was received by email on 15/01/2020 including the following points:

- The amount of historic fabric to be lost was unclear and should an extension be considered appropriate, then this would need to be achieved without substantial loss of historic fabric.
- The position of the proposed extension, set back behind the listed building ensured that visual separation was maintained between the building and the adjoining properties thereby preserving the appearance of a villa set within its own substantial grounds which is so important to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- The form of the extension should be more traditional in its proportions in order to respect the character of the existing building and ensure that it appeared as a subservient addition.

The Arboricultural Officer was also consulted and raised the following points:

- Removal of the trees within the orchard of 9 Grove Road to facilitate development would be contrary to WCBC Tree & Woodland Strategy (obj. 2(4)) and Planning Policy Wales 10 (2018).
- Any proposed extension to the rear of no. 9 Grove Road will need to accommodate the existing orchard area and provide a suitable allocation of space to undertake additional enhancement planting to ensure a level of sustainability and longevity for the orchard.

### 3.3 Development of Concept Designs

Further design proposals were then developed in response to the comments raised. A more traditional roof pitch was proposed whilst the extent of alteration work to the existing was more clearly identified.



(Fig 8) Revised concept designs

An arboricultural consultant was also instructed to undertake a site visit to survey all significant trees that may be affected by the development proposals. The arboricultural report is discussed in more detail in later sections of this statement.

### **3.4 Preparation of Detailed Designs**

A heritage consultant was subsequently employed to assist with finalisation of the design process and to prepare a Heritage Impact Assessment. Internal design reviews identified further changes to consider the significance of the various elements and character of the existing building. These changes included:

- The creation of a glazed link to emphasise the separation between the main house and new extensions.
- Relocating the lift shaft to the yard area and adding a pitched roof.
- Relocating the WC to provide improved rear access.
- Altering the new fenestration to reflect the character of the existing.
- Alter the proposed roof pitches to match the original house.

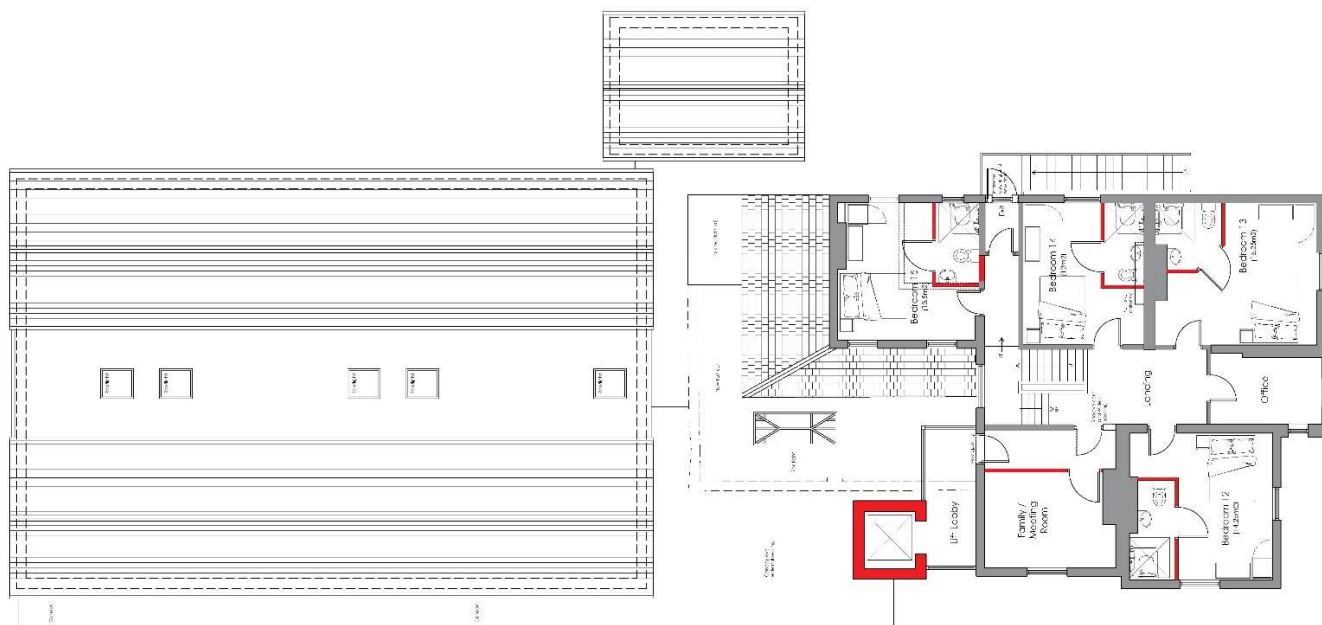
The finalised detailed designs are illustrated and discussed in more detail in subsequent sections of this statement.





The proposed first floor layout resembles the configuration of the original house. Bedrooms are organised around the central landing with an existing office to the front of the property retained for the same use. New en-suites would be added to each bedroom with original features to be retained. Again, all bedroom sizes comply with recognised care standards.

The landing area is dominated by the main stair and feature window. Both features would be retained with the new lift carefully located to maintain unobstructed views through the landing window. A new corridor links the landing to the lift, providing level access to most of the upper floor. The adjacent room would then be used for a variety of useful functions including private / family meetings, consultations and therapies. A new fire escape is discreetly located to the side of the property, providing emergency egress from the first floor.



(Fig 11) First floor plan as proposed

### 4.1.2 Amount and Scale

The existing house would be repurposed in conjunction with the new extensions to provide a new 16-bedroom nursing home. The proposed west elevation illustrates the relationship between the original house and proposed extensions.

The single storey extensions with a much lower ridge height would appear as subservient to the main house. The lift tower would be set behind the original house and not directly visible from the street.



(Fig 12) Side elevation as proposed

### 4.1.3 Appearance

The proposed front elevation shows how the original house and views of the property from the street would be retained. A detached garage located to the side of the house would be demolished and replaced with a new structure of similar proportions and materials. A new glazed link would connect the new building back to the main house.



(Fig 13) Front elevation as proposed

The side and rear elevations show the proposed additions at the rear. The new bedroom extension would comprise of a simple rectangular form finished with dual pitched roofs to match the angle of the original house. The roof would be finished in slate with a render finish to the walls. Fenestration patterns would reflect the patterns of the original house with low cills to allow residents views of the gardens.

The brickwork yard wall would remain visible with a flat roof on top. This area would provide a separation between the main extension and original house providing a defined separation between the old and new.

A timber canopy would continue along the length of the extension to provide solar shading and cover to the outdoor terrace. This device also unifies the different building elements into a linear form.

The lift tower is set behind the existing house and comprises of a solid render form with slate pitched roof. A glazed link provides a lightweight connection back to the main house.



(Fig 14) Rear elevation as proposed

## 4.2 Character

This section explains how the proposals sustain or enhance local character.

### Placemaking:

- The proposals respect the dominant character of the original house in relation to location and prominence within the site context.
- Clear distinction between old and new.
- In-keeping with the residential character of the area.
- Set back from the road with landscape features retained.
- Good connections with garden spaces for the residents to enjoy.

### Amount and Density:

- A net provision of 16 en-suite bedrooms to be accommodated within a relatively modest extension of a large property set within extensive grounds.
- Such numbers represent the minimum for a viable care home.
- There is sufficient infrastructure and facilities already in place to accommodate the additional bedrooms.
- In the context of a larger care home and hospice within the immediate locality.

### Streets:

- The proposed extension would be set behind the principal building and not visible from the street.
- Landscape features and established boundary treatments would be retained.

### Spaces & Public Realm:

- There are large side and rear gardens for the residents to enjoy in a safe and secure setting.
- An accessible terrace and ramped access enabling residents to explore the walled gardens.
- External communal spaces organised around existing and proposed buildings promote access to the outdoors.

### Mix of Uses and Tenure:

- A dedicated nursing home providing a high standard of care for residents with physical or mental healthcare needs.
- A neighbourhood shared by other care homes within a safe, secure and tranquil setting.
- Opportunity to provide good quality, accessible care accommodation to modern standards.
- A recognised need to support an ageing population.

#### Scale:

- The proposals are proportionate to the size and scale of the existing property and grounds.
- A subservient building design that respects the proportions of the main property as well as the surrounding buildings and their proximity.
- The proposed nursing home in its extended format would still be smaller in comparison to other more expansive care homes in the neighbourhood.

#### Layout:

- The proposed extension would be set-back from the principal building and not visible from the street.
- Orientation of proposed windows to maximise natural daylight, ventilation and to take advantage of the best outlooks.

#### Heritage:

- Extensive consultation to ensure the proposals accord with conservation specialists.
- Scheme has been designed so that it is single storey and not visible from the street.
- Clear definition between the historic part of the building and the new.
- Original plan form to be retained with en-suite bathrooms formed using lightweight partitions.
- Many original features are retained.
- Refer to separate Heritage Impact Assessment which provides a summary of the main alterations, an assessment of the significance of the affected elements, and the justification for the proposed changes.

#### Detailed Design:

- Emphasis on good quality materials and workmanship.
- Careful detailing important to achieving a simple and well-built concept.
- Any alterations to the existing fabric to be kept to a minimum.

### 4.3 Access

This section explains how the proposals ensure ease of access for all into the development and to all elements within the site.

- All visitors enter the site from Grove Road via the entrance gates which has been widened to permit safe vehicular movements.
- 8no. car parking spaces are provided in accordance with local authority guidance. Please see below for parking provision note.
- 1no. accessible parking space is provided.
- An ambulance bay / turning area is provided to ensure vehicles can enter and leave the site in a forward gear.
- Principal access into the building is via the stepped approach of the main entrance that leads into the main entrance hall.
- An alternative ramped approach is available to the side of the main house.
- Level access would be provided throughout the ground floor and onto the external terrace.
- All new bedrooms would feature suitably sized door openings and space for movement in accordance with current Building Regulations and care home standards.
- A new lift would provide full access to most of the first floor within the existing house.

Parking provision in accordance with LPG Note 16:

#### Requirement -

- 1 parking space / 2 bed spaces
- 1 cycle space / 10 bed spaces
- 1 cycle space / 10 employees

#### Provision -

- 16 bedrooms = 8 parking spaces
- 3 cycle spaces

## 4.4 Movement

This section describes how the proposals promote sustainable means of travel.

- The site is within walking distance of the town centre with good access to public transport and other amenities.
- A frequent bus service passes along Grove Road with bus stops in close proximity.
- Secure bicycle storage is proposed to promote sustainable modes of transport and travel choice.

## 4.5 Environmental Sustainability

This section describes how the proposals achieve efficient use and protection of natural resources, enhance biodiversity and demonstrate designing for change.

### 4.5.1 Landscape / Habitat

- Many of the important landscape spaces and features have been retained. The effective use of the garden areas to provide safe and enjoyable outdoor spaces are regarded as central to the design concept.
- Refer to separate Tree Report which identifies tree location, species, size and condition in accordance with BS 5837:2012.
- The loss of any tree is always regrettable but in this instance any removal has been justified in relation to condition, life expectancy and relative significance with plenty of scope for replacement planting as part of the development.
- The tree report also provides guidance on the protection of trees during development and identifies opportunities to properly maintain and improve existing landscape and biodiversity features as part of a management plan under the new development.
- The tree report concludes that provided all the protection measures are put into practice this development should not have a detrimental effect on the long-term amenity of the area as the most significant trees within the site can be retained and protected.

### 4.5.2 Energy and Resource Efficiency

- The proposals consider passive design strategies by maximising opportunities for natural daylighting and ventilation whilst giving regard to orientation and solar shading.
- A fabric first approach will ensure that all new build elements will be built to modern insulation and air-tightness standards.
- Where possible, all specified materials should be from renewable or recyclable sources.

### 4.5.3 Water and Waste Management

- The expansive gardens areas means that the majority of the site will continue to permit the free drainage of surface water.
- Consideration shall be given to the potential of permeable surfaces to car parking areas.
- All rainwater collected from the new buildings will be disposed via a soakaway in the garden area.
- An enclosed bin store would provide sufficient space for the collection and recycling of waste.

## 4.6 Community Safety

This section describes how the proposal ensures attractive, safe public spaces and security.

- The stone wall to back of pavement provides a defined boundary to the street.
- The open aspect at the front would permit natural surveillance of the car park area and main entrance.
- Low level lighting would assist with natural surveillance, improved wayfinding and a safer environment.
- The main entrance would feature controlled access.
- The walled gardens and secure fencing would allow residents unobstructed access to outdoor spaces within a safe and secure environment.

## 5.0 Relevant Planning Policy

### Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (1996 – 2011)

- Strategic Policy PS1
- Strategic Policy PS2
- Strategic Policy PS3
- Strategic Policy PS4
- Policy GDP1 – Development Objectives
- Policy EC4 – Hedgerows, Trees and Woodland
- Policy EC7 – Conservation Areas
- Policy EC9 – Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest
- Policy H11 – Residential and Nursing Homes
- Policy T8 - Parking

### Local / Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Local Planning Guidance Note 4 – Conservation Areas
- Local Planning Guidance Note 6 – Access to and Use of Buildings
- Local Planning Guidance Note 7 – Landscape and Development
- Local Planning Guidance Note 16 – Parking Standards
- Local Planning Guidance Note 17 – Trees and Development
- Local Planning Guidance Note 24 – Designing Out Crime
- Local Planning Guidance Note 32 – Biodiversity and Development

### National Planning Guidance

- Planning Policy Wales (11<sup>th</sup> Edition, February 2021)
- Technical Advice Note 12 (TAN 12) – Design (March 2016)
- Technical Advice Note 24 (TAN24) – The Historic Environment (May 2017)

## 6.0 Executive Summary

### 6.1 General Development Objectives

The proposed development responds to a growing need to serve an ageing population within an established community. The proposals reflect the significant townscape character within the Grove Road area making the best use of an existing property and its grounds.

Extensive consultation ensured a sympathetic design reflected the character of the listed property in terms of its layout, scale and appearance. Consideration was given to siting and orientation to conserve energy and water resources. There is also adequate infrastructure and services available to serve this development.

### 6.2 Heritage

The Heritage Impact Assessment concludes that No. 9 Grove Road is an important and interesting building that has formed part of the history and development of the area. It is often difficult to find new uses for large properties such as this, and the proposed new use has been designed to have minimal impact on the existing listed building and its fabric.

### 6.3 Landscape and Ecology

Many of the important landscape spaces and features would be retained. The effective use of the garden areas is regarded as central to the design concept. The specialist Tree Report concludes that provided all the [recommended] measures are put into practice this development should not have a detrimental effect on the long-term amenity of the area as the most significant trees within the site can be retained and protected.

### 6.4 Access and Parking

The site is within walking distance of the town centre with good access to public transport and other amenities. A frequent bus service passes along Grove Road with bus stops in proximity. Secure bicycle storage is proposed to promote sustainable modes of transport and travel choice. Off-street car-parking would be provided in accordance with local authority requirements.

### 6.5 Safety and Security

The stone wall to back of pavement provides a defined boundary to the street. The open aspect at the front would permit natural surveillance of the car park area and main entrance. The walled gardens and secure fencing would allow residents unobstructed access to outdoor spaces within a safe and secure environment.