

Planning and affordable housing Statement

Conversion of Mead House (former medical Center) into residential supported housing- support hub

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 BUCKMASTERBATCUP have been instructed by Reliant Care Ltd, Mr. Subz Ahluwalia to act on their behalf in respect of submitting a pre application to London Borough of Hillingdon Council for the change of use from offices, health care to co living units with ancillary offices and therapy support provisions, at Mead House, Mead House Lane, Hayes UB4 8EW
- 1.2 The application site is located within the administrative boundary of London Borough of Hillingdon and has remained vacant since March 2024. Access to the site by pedestrian or vehicular is part of the mini roundabout junction of Hayes End Roa, with Mead House Lane leading to the site access. In terms of public transport and accessibility level (PTAL) of 2, Hayes and Harlington Train station is located circa 2 miles to the south of the sites and is served by Elizabeth Line and Great Western Railway services into Central London. Uxbridge Station is circa 2.5Miles to the northwest of the site with several existing bus stops located closes the site.
- 1.3 This statement provides a description of the site and background, planning history, and the development proposals. The legislative context in which the applications should be determined is set out.
- 1.4 The statement identifies the main considerations and assesses how the proposal accords with the requirements of the legislation.

Having assessed the proposal against the legislative context NPPF, Local Plan Part 1, Part 2, Housing Strategy, SPD

- 1.5 and relevant considerations and conclusions are drawn. The conclusions indicate that Planning Approval should be granted for the proposed scheme

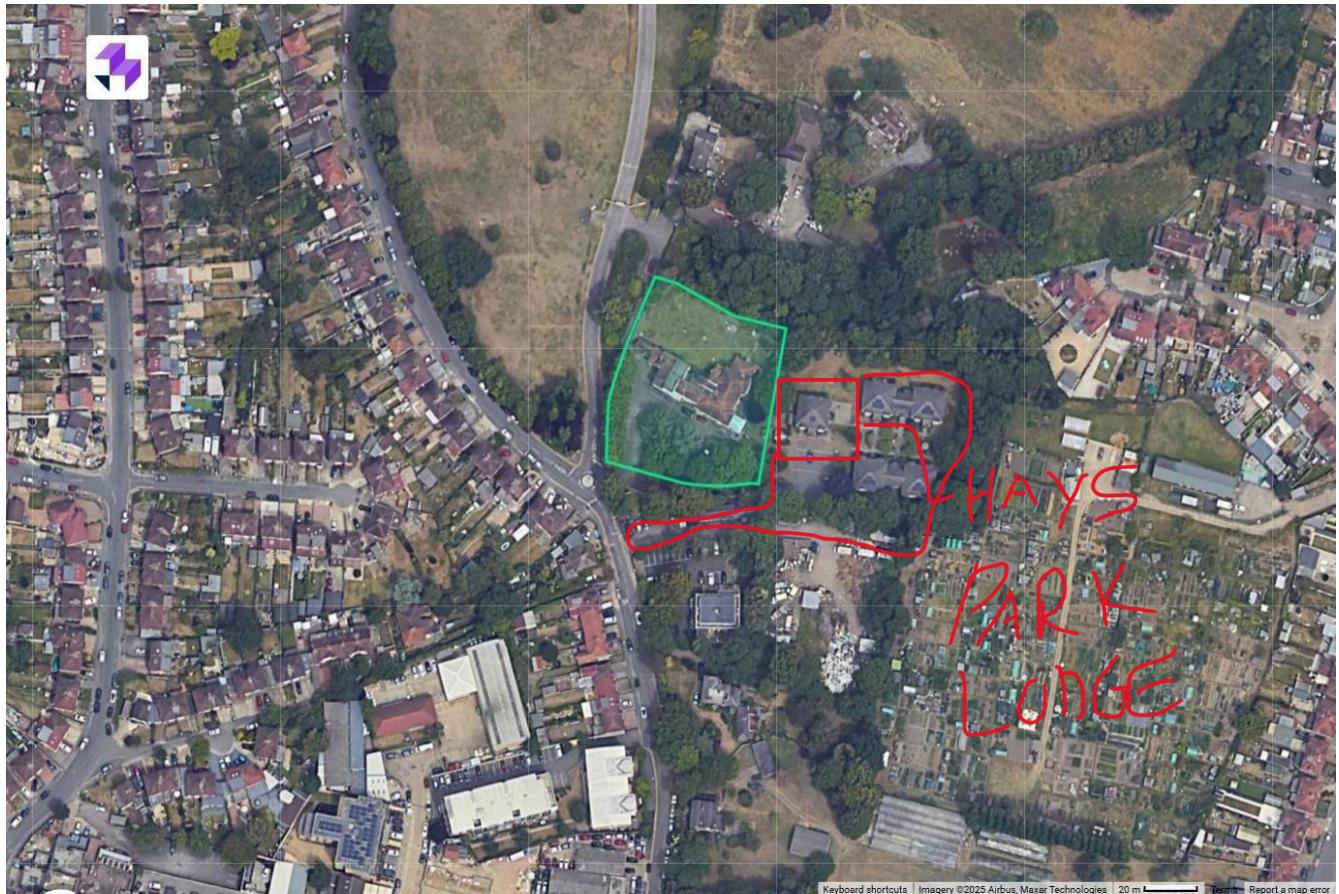
1.6 This statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents submitted with the application. The documents include the following:

- Completed Application Forms
- Location Plans
- Site Plans
- Floor Plans
- Consultant reports as part of the planning application validation checklist
- LPA to consider NPPF, Local Plan Part 1, Part 2, Housing Strategy, SPD
- Policy H12 of the London plan states that the delivery, retention and refurbishment of supported and specialized housing which meets an identified need should be supported. This includes accommodation for disabled people (including people with physical and sensory impairments and learning difficulties)
- NB: This application is for internal changes and reconfiguration of the existing offices into residential units and should have been considered under Permitted Use, as the application site has been used for numerous use classifications historically.
- The Neighbouring site is operated by Ability Housing Association next to the applicant site, this consists of 20 flats, configured of four buildings of four flats each, two bungalow and two flats above the staff offices in the main building.

Providing short term service for up to two years and staff are on site 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and a sleep in is provided from 22.00pm – 07.00am. The design and form of the buildings are modern, with no chimneys, nor architectural features, and within the green belt policy criteria and shares private drive and road access for the application site.

2.0 Site Designations / Constraints

2.1 Mead House is a purpose-built medical Center located off Hayes End Road and accessed via Mead House Lane and positioned strategically away from the main road, hays town Centre and residential properties. However, it remains very close to all amenities and transport links.



2.2 The application site comprises of office buildings, car parking and green amenity space to the rear, neighbouring properties on the Land on the east side are owned by the Mayor and Burgesses of London Borough of Hillingdon and Church of Commissioners for England to the West North, which is grassed and undeveloped. The surrounding area is predominantly residential with a range of varieties of houses and a 20 unit supported housing complex within the locality of this proposed application site and green belt policy designation.

2.3 The sites are bound by a dense tree belt along the western and northern boundary of the site. There are also trees planting along Mead House Lane, screening the visibility of the building from the surrounding area.

2.4 In terms of the natural environment, the proposed development sits within the Council Green Belt Policy and some TPO trees are within proximity. Notwithstanding this, the building has been in existence for some time and used as a community facility, GP practice and a variety of other facilities and uses, without any deterioration in the environment or in contradiction of the Green Belt Policy.

2.5 Car parking spaces serve the buildings, and form part of the cartilages, located to the east, south and west of the buildings, respectively. However, due to the nature of the client group, they do not possess a motor vehicle, and it is proposed that any parking spaces are allocated as staff, we would like to seek clarification on how this would meet LBH Policy.

2.6 Access to the site is via North Boundary and provides direct access into the site leading onto what could be designated as a private drive – road towards a dead end. Vehicles entering the application site can undertake maneuvers and to safely rotate vehicles within the application site.

2.7 Pedestrian access is primarily gained in the same direction, which is well established and maintained within the boundaries of the site, no further alterations are required or sought by the applicant.

2.8 Mead House and any land outbuildings are under one management and title deed, For this planning application and advice.

2.9 The gross internal area of the buildings is as follows:

- Mead House Existing Ground Floor 542 Sqm
- Mead House Existing First Floor 411.4 Sqm
- Mead House Existing Second Floor 95.1 Sqm
- Total combined area 1030.5 Sqm

3. Planning History, Decommissioning

3.1 The site has been subject to several previous planning applications, albeit minor in nature, but in keeping with its change in use over the duration.

1. Previous Planning applications for the property as follows:
12298/APP/2010/2066 - NMA ramp & railings amendment to planning ref 2009/2297
2. 12298/APP/2009/2297 - single story side extension 12298/TRE/2008/32 - to fell a tree and tree surgery to several TPO's
3. 12298/APP/2008/242 - new pedestrian gate, new access path to new reception, wheelchair car parking, new steps/ramp & minor alterations to conservatory
4. 12298/E/98/2233 - erection side conservatory 12298/D/98/1926 - erection detached garage
5. 12298/A/94/1513 - change of use of residential institutional to client day Centre, offices, lift housing & additional car parking 3

6. *Decommissioning and disposal of mead house see below 7 - 15*

7. Mead House was decommissioned and approved for disposal and deemed surplus at the Cabinet Meeting dated 15th February 2024, with alternative options considered and rejected. The decision and report was subject to *Section 100(A) and paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and many parts kept confidential*
8. The decision to dispose of the site was part of a business case taken through the democratic process, asset management, elected members, commissioning NHS and we would suggest officers speak with democratic services to access the restricted reports which were not made public.
9. All efforts have been made to contact democratic services and the service director James Raven, and democratic services Mark Braddock and to date no response has been received. It may be appropriate if the LPA could access this information and determine if any further sequential testing is expected

10. However, it should be noted that the reprocurement of GP services has been moved to Wood Lane Medical Centre 2a Wood Lane, Ruslip HA4 6ER, where the NHS would provide incentives for the GP service at Mead House to move location.
11. The GP service hasn't been dissolved but moved into a more central and bespoke location. Therefore, the NHS would have no further need for Mead House to continue to deliver a GP practice and would have considered alternative uses for the site prior to vacating the property.
12. The decision to dispose of the assets thereafter or seek alternative use would rest with the Council, and if deemed surplus to requirements, therefore disposed of on the open market, which occurred on the application site.
13. The rationale to move the GP practice from Mead House to its current location was at the discretion of the NHS. We believe the move was promoted to provide services at the new location which is more fit for purpose infrastructure and facilities to meet the needs of neighborhood and wider community
14. The rationale to sell the Mead House and to explore alternative uses prior to the disposal of the application site was at the discretion of Hillingdon Council. By selling the application site, potential suitable alternative proposals to re-purpose the site and potential alternative uses must have been discussed and suitable alternative options, i.e. housing, mix use, as a planning application for the site once sold was inevitable.
15. Officers have already commented on the application site as part of the pre application process that they are satisfied with the proposed use would be fully integrated into the residential surrounding as there is reasonable separation between the site and the surrounding residential uses, as the application site was historically used as a residential institution until 1995 and a homelessness hostel. In addition to this, Hayes Park Lodge is within the application area and provides 20 units of supported living.

4. Proposed Development and Allocation Policy

The proposal of Mead House is the next step in delivering holistic services onsite, without the need for current services users having to leave their home to access therapy treatment, i.e. Sauna, Light Therapy, which is currently unavailable. Reliant Care has recently commissioned a new service at Church Road, this provides accommodation-based support with the inclusion of a Gym Pod, Hot Tub, Infra-Red Sauna, and Sensory Room. This state-of-the-art facility was commissioned on service user feedback and the 360-approach endorsed by CQC in communicating with the service users and developing tailored made solutions. These new units have been fully funded by Reliant Care, as there was no funding to pioneer alternative delivery models.

Mead House will deliver upon the success and blueprint of the Church Road project, with greater economies of scale, increased services users on site, and larger communal areas to deliver, therapy treatments in-house will be a critical success factor. Ongoing 24r support is provided by trained staff at our central location, who can travel to the application site, to provide additional staffing support when service users are experiencing emotional and behavioral difficulties and access to the onsite therapy rooms required out of hours.

- **Service users will be issued tenancy agreements (AST),** and the average length of occupancy is approximately 24 months or longer. This is not a direct access hostel or foyer project but settled accommodation leading to independent living.
- **Head office Services**

Services at our head office provide a range of therapy services including a café and work placed initiatives, which leads towards independent living and providing a culture of self-worth and confidence.

- Art psychotherapy sessions operated in collaboration with Brunel University
 - psychology sessions
 - music therapy sessions
 - Group kitchen
 - supported employment

- 4.1 **23 Units over three floors:** GF, FF, Second Floor
- 4.2 These dwellings are affordable supported housing for clients with Learning disabilities and mental health, with associated car parking and drop-off facilities, with pedestrian access.
- 4.3 This application proposes redeveloping the existing building to create a specialist living hub for those with learning disabilities and mental health
- 4.4 In terms of scale, the proposed development has now been re-designed, considering comments received at the initial pre application meeting held on the 27thJanuary 2025.
- 4.5 The new proposal consists of the following configuration to each floor:

4.2 Ground Floor

7 units of co-living accommodation:

Therapy Room, consultation room x 1

- Communal Kitchen, Communal Dining room, Communal sitting room
- Reception, Office, Laundry room
- Access to Garden

First Floor

12 Units of Co-living accommodation

- Office / Therapy Room x1
- Nurses Desk and seating area communal, sensory walls
- Laundry Room x 1

Second Floor: 4 Rooms of co-living accommodation

Ground Floor communal space support services.

Art psychotherapy

We use these sessions to support individuals, reduce distress, improve social, emotional and mental health by promoting insight, self-compassion and a sense of urgency and self-worth. It also helps people express themselves and helps people to deal with complex emotions, trauma and other difficult experiences.

Psychology session with emphasis on PBS

We use these sessions for individuals to learn about their own behavior and help them in their daily life to better navigate their own interactions with others. It can also improve their skills in things like communication and dealing with conflict management.

Talking Therapy:

Our talking therapy sessions are utilized to support people to deal with a variety of mental and emotional problems. Additionally, it helps people feel less alone, understand their feelings and develop coping strategies. The other benefits of our sessions are to help them deal with depression, anxiety, social anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Sensory stimulation and social activities:

The facility will have sensory stimulation activities including the following:

Vertical farming:

Our vertical farming is aimed at providing individuals with touch and sight sensory needs. The sense of touch relies on a complex arrangement of sensory receptors that detect physical stimuli in our environment and from inside our body. We believe that our vertical farming will give individuals the opportunity to see things they have planted grow. This would give them a sense of achievement which would contribute significantly to their well-being and recovery.

Greenery preservation:

Our greenery preservation will be part of our vertical farming where preserved foliage is created by substituting the sap of a plant or tree with a specially formulated glycerin-based solution. This process allows the foliage to keep its natural color and texture, but it no longer requires watering, feeding, trimming or repotting.

Conversation café:

Our Conversation cafes are informal gatherings for individuals with mental health and LD/ASD to develop their social skills, build on their confidence, practice speaking English, have an opportunity to discuss issues (including housing support, completing of forms, etc.) and receive support or be signposted to other professionals who are better placed to give them the needed support.

4.3 Floating Support Arrangements 24hr Cover when required

Mead House will provide personalized support services, adopting a person-centered approach in line with each service user's individual support plan. These plans will identify the specific needs and challenges of each user, allowing us to tailor services that effectively mitigate risks while promoting the least restrictive and most positive outcomes.

Support staffing will be available 24 hours a day, operating on a shift basis. The level of support and staffing hours allocated to each service user will vary, depending on the severity of their condition and the nature of the required care.

Mead House will welcome individuals with mental health needs and learning disabilities, many of whom require a high degree of support. Daily assistance will be provided, which includes, but is not limited to, personal care, meal preparation, medication administration, scheduled accompanied community outings, cleaning, and Positive Behavioral Support (PBS) interventions. This comprehensive care approach ensures that all service users receive the necessary attention in a safe and supportive environment, promoting positive outcomes in their day-to-day lives.

Support staff are located at various sites within the borough and at our head office and available to support service users around the clock when required. This will mean 1 vehicle attending the site and assisting on-site support staff when required, currently based on existing service provisions and operational statistics this is infrequent. On the outset the staffing ratio will be 1 support worker for every 3-service user, and staffed accordingly with respect to the occupancy levels, the wake-in staff at night will be 4 staff members, with an on-call duty manager

Proposed Staffing Levels at Mead House

Once the scheme is fully occupied it is proposed that the staffing levels will have 6 full-time daytime staff, 1 therapy practitioner officer who will be part of the day time support team of 7. on call manager and 3 administrative staff and wake-in staff for the night-time provision will be 4 staff members and an on-call duty manager

The recruitment and selection process will provide preference to local skills and labour within the vicinity of the site, which supports employment and reduces travel and carbon emissions and full training and continuous CPD will be provided and cycle to work initiatives and access to the company electric pool car.

- 4.5 **Ground Floor Consultation Rooms** Therapy Services for Learning Disabilities Clients and Mental Health. 2 consultation rooms, both between 7-16 m². These will provide additional private space for staff or health care professionals, provide holistic health treatments like IV therapy and provide access for medical practitioners to assess and manage patients under the Mental Health Act. The treatment rooms will offer a range of therapies, including Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) and clinical therapies to support the administration of complex treatments, in addition to more therapeutic treatments. The rooms will be also used as additional
- 4.6 Service users will be supported on site and when leaving the premises they will have a support worker with them if required, as independence is critical and where this can be established over a period and then cascading up and down depending on the support needs of that individual. This arrangement and delivery model is in operation on Church Road and at the client's head office location in Harrow and other locations.
- 4.7 We would have a robust three-layered safety and security system in place including face recognition CCTV system at the door which captures footages of individuals who has come in or gone out, a biometric door entry using the finger prints of the service user accessing their personal accommodation, an entry system that collects data on which service user's key-fob had been logged to come in and out of the unit and staff on site to provide physical supervision of service users.

4.8 Our system gives us a live update of each person coming in and out.

Additionally, service users who are on any form of legal restrictions including DoLS shall be given 1:1 support especially when they are accessing the wider community in line with CQC requirement. This would promote the safety of the individual and the public at large

4.9 The client group requires care and support, which is not available elsewhere and this scheme is not a half-way house for high-risk individuals that would disrupt and cause a nuisance within the community. These are residents of the community seeking assistance to live an independent life within the borough, whom require specialist support that is missing at the present time

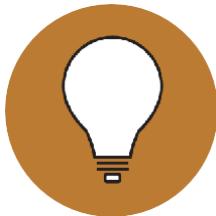
4.5 Design Guidelines

The Design Guide focuses on the housing needs of adults who live with learning disabilities, Autism, and associated physical and sensory disabilities to enable more suitable housing for people who need it, when they need it, close to their local communities wherever possible.

It stretches across age ranges from young adults transitioning into adulthood, through to older adults with learning disabilities for whom a different kind of offer is required and addresses the needs of those who wish to live independently with support in the community, to those who have more challenging care and support that require Access to shared or individual gardens.



Be accessible and enabling, to help people learn and develop skills for independence and routines of their own.



Be sustainable in both building and refurbishment materials and processes, and in use, using green technology and tariffs, energy saving design and smart technology to assist residents in keeping utility bills and maintenance costs low.

Accommodation needs to be part of a community and close to public transport links, shops, green space and activities.

The accommodation should not stand out as specialist housing compared to a standard offering; therefore, the design and material specification of proposed developments should reflect the surrounding local context and appear non-institutional wherever possible.



Non-Institutional

Finishes, fixtures and fittings should be robust, maintenance-friendly and non-institutional.

disabled adults should have control over their own lives and who they live with. To the people who receive services and their families, success looks like homes and surrounding environments where people can be happy and close to their families, friends and support networks. We therefore want to enable a vibrant and affordable housing market that supports these aims

5. Legislative Planning Context, Permitted Development, Brownfield Passport Questions

- 5.1 It is recognized by the Government that there is an urgent need to increase the rate of house building in England and make the housing supply more responsive to changes and demand and in particular
- 5.2 As part of a range of measures and reforms designed to address the lack of supply of housing allowing the Change of Use from offices to residential to take place more easily provides a timely opportunity to contribute to meeting housing pressing need.
- 5.3 This approach provides the joint benefits of encouraging and supporting the increase in housing supply and encouraging the re-generation of offices which will in turn ultimately reduce pressure on green field sites.
- 5.4 Removing the requirement to submit a planning application for a Change of Use – and the associated costs and delays – is intended to encourage developers to bring forward land and buildings for residential use.
- 5.5 The Town and Country Planning General Permitted Order (GPDO) provides a grant of planning permission in-principle by giving the deemed consent for specific developments, without the operator having to make a full application to the Local Planning Authority for planning permission.
- 5.6 Schedule 2 of the GPDO grants permission for classes of development described as “permitted development”.
- 5.7 **Brownfield Passport**, which would be more specific about the development that would be regarded as acceptable, with the default answer to suitable proposals being a straightforward “yes”.
- 5.8 Following these recent changes and accelerated delivery models, we would like the LPA to review if any of the above is relevant to the proposed site and what could fit into the spirit of the proposed site

6. Affordable Housing Statement

1. The Council's Housing Strategy for 2021/22 to 2025/26 outlines a comprehensive approach to address housing challenges in the borough with over 375 new units of affordable housing required annually, not considering specific specialist housing needs, which is not being met and those needs of people with Learning Disabilities

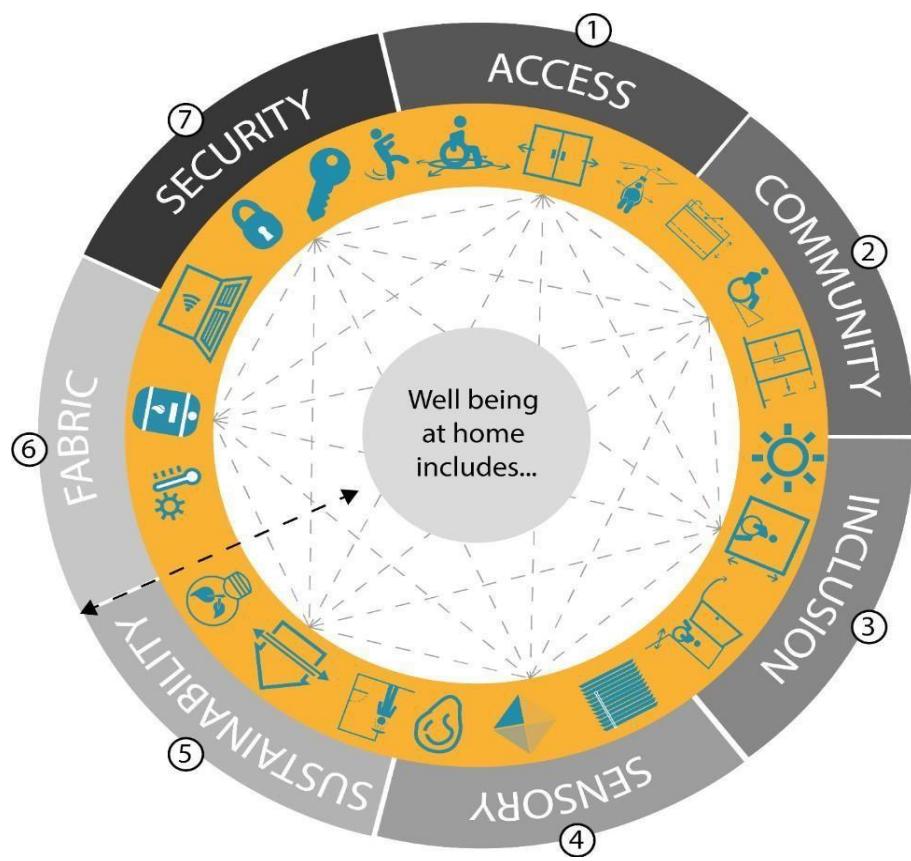
Key initiatives include:

2. **Investing in Existing Homes:** The Council is committed to enhancing the current housing stock by prioritizing works that reduce heating costs and fuel poverty, thereby contributing to lower carbon emissions. This aligns with the Council's declaration of a climate emergency and its goal to significantly reduce carbon emissions from housing.
3. This ethos is embedded in the design in terms of fabric first principles and construction design, ensuring optimum levels of energy performance is met, coupled with effective M&E solutions lowering the usage of fossil fuels and cost to heat homes. Furthermore, we are considering if the site would be suitable for a local district heating system or ground source system which could supply some or all the heating for the site
4. **Providing New Affordable Homes:** To meet the growing demand, the Council plans to deliver additional affordable housing through the construction of new council homes and collaboration with Providers. This effort includes securing affordable housing through planning contributions, with a focus on offering low-cost rented homes and options for low-cost home ownership to assist households aspiring to own homes for all tenures.
5. **This includes developing housing options for vulnerable adults and older adults that promote access to affordable active independent living.**

6. The Scheme at Mead House goes a step further and provides a state-of-the-art facility for the residents with a range of services and facilities accessible to the residents with Learning Disabilities and mental health
7. For people with a learning disability housing can occupy a place of even greater importance than for most. We know there are thousands of people with a learning disability living with older family carers, with minimal social services engagement or planning with those families for future housing and care needs. This is leading to crisis situations when family carers become too old or ill to continue giving the essential support to their loved one, and placement of working aged people with a learning disability in residential care, and other settings that are not best placed to meet their needs.
8. A new generation of people with a learning disability are coming into adulthood, many having rightly attended mainstream schools, who are taking part in education and training and want, like their peers, to work and make their way in life as independent adults, but who may also have support needs. They and their families will struggle with finding appropriate housing and support.
9. There are hundreds of people with a learning disability languishing, detained in mental health hospitals because the specialized supported housing needed for them in the community (and social care support) isn't there. They don't need to be in hospital, but they are stuck there in part because of a lack of appropriate housing.
10. Officers have already sought clarification from Harrow Council on the scheme delivered at Rayner's Lane (Harrow Borough), which was approved of in 2019 and are satisfied the proposal at Mead House would fall under class C2 and would not therefore trigger a requirement to provide affordable housing either or make a financial contribution towards off-site delivery.

7. Site Viability

For the housing that will be needed in future by people with a learning disability, there remains an overreliance on housing providers to raise further private finance, given the historically low levels of capital that have been available from public sources. We need to see the government working with local authorities and housing providers to plan the investment needed for future supported housing needs amongst people with a learning disability. The housing needed will not just appear nor will it be accessible on the open market no adapted for their personal needs.



The developed costs for learning disability units against standard build costs are comparable to the uplifts experienced between Sheltered Accommodation flats and those for extra care housing, being in the region of 25-40% over and above standard build costs and additional funding is being sought to support the delivery of the scheme with our partners.

The requirement for communal areas, anti-ligature fittings, sensory devices, are all above any general needs affordable housing specifications. Funding from GLA, Charitable organizations is being sought to support the additional build and refurbishments costs, all these units are all for affordable housing.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 The proposal can provide the desired level of residential units in accordance with the government's aspirations and boosting housing supply.
- 8.2 The proposal can demonstrate and deliver a policy compliant scheme for affordable housing to meet the needs of those with Learning Disabilities and Mental health with specialist wrap around support and clinical services at this HUB location, which will be the first holistic wrap around hub.
- 8.3 By contrast to the sustainable benefits, no change to the appearance of the scheme, functionality or form will change, even at an operational level.
- 8.4 In summary, the site is in a sustainable location and will have a limited impact on the area or neighbours with no technical reasons not to support the application, considering its previous uses over the years, ranging from a hostel, GP practice, Covid vaccination Centre, and all within the Green Belt Policy.
- 8.5 The new proposal has been adapted to meet the requirements and commentary received on the 27th of January 2025 at the initial pre application meeting.
- 8.6 The proposed development will provide a much needed, dedicated hub for residential and supported housing for individuals who have learning disabilities and mental health.
- 8.7 Provisions will be made on site for cycle parking and the site is also accessible by public transport. These factors seek to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport to access the site.
- 8.8 The Proposed Development will result in the creation of a high quality, sustainable development in terms of energy efficiency and sustainable construction and renovation including renewable energy and components Overall, the Proposed Development is acceptable when assessed against local and national policy and therefore, the application should be approved without delay.

- 8.9 Green Belt Assessment 1) To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas. Not applicable to the site
- 8.10 ρ 2) To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another; Not applicable to the site
- 8.11 ρ 3) To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Not applicable to the site
- 8.12 ρ 4) To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns. Not applicable to the site
- 8.13 ρ 5) To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land, not applicable to the site