

Planning and Design and Access Statement

**Oak Tree Cottage
Hopewell Housing**

Introduction

This statement has been compiled to support a full planning application for the conversion of the site referred to as Oak Tree Cottage, Court Drive. The description of development is as follows:

Change of use from C2 residential institution to C3 comprising of 6 self-contained units and minor alterations to the elevations.

Planning History

5449/APP/2019/2728

Side extension, porch and addition of a second floor, involving alterations to all elevations. Change of Use from C3 residential to C2 residential institution (amended plans 19.02.20)

5449/APP/2022/795

Minor material amendment application (S73) to amend conditions 2,3, 4, 5 and 7 of planning application reference 5449/APP/2019/2728 (Side extension, porch and addition of a second floor, involving alterations to all elevations. Change of Use from C3 residential to C2 residential institution (amended plans 19.02.20)).

The changes include amendments to the front facade and side elevation to improve the appearance of the building, submission of further detailed landscaping plans, fire evacuation strategy details and material details submission.

Principle of Development

Consent has been granted for the conversion of the former residential property into 6 units within Use Class C2, designated for residential institutional care. As the site originally had a residential use before the extensions were added, and since C2 is recognized as a form of residential accommodation under the London Plan 2021, converting the units to C3 (residential use) aligns with the development plan.

Given the site's location in a primarily residential area, it is deemed suitable for a typical C3 residential development. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2023 advocates for the efficient use of land, and Policy H2 of the London Plan 2021 highlights the crucial role small sites play in increasing housing supply. This proposal is consistent with these policies.

Regarding the unit mix, the application proposes converting the existing C2 accommodation into C3 units, consisting of 5 x 1-bedroom and 1 x 2-bedroom units. The borough's housing needs have been taken into account, in line with Policy H1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan (Part 1), which emphasizes the need for a diverse range of housing types and tenures. However, the site's limited size and existing layout pose constraints

that restrict the ability to deliver a wider variety of units. Therefore, it is not considered feasible to provide a broader mix of C3 accommodation without retaining the current layout.

Where possible, adjustments have been made to the layout, including combining Unit 1 on the ground floor with the staff office space, which enabled the creation of a 2-bedroom unit.

Design

The exterior of the building would fundamentally remain the same. There are some minor realignments of the window openings which will improve the quality of the elevations and add further articulations. The bulk scale and massing would also remain the same. The internal spaces would be amended and further commentary on this is included within the accommodation section of this statement.

Quality of Accommodation

The internal floor areas of each unit exceed the minimum space standards set out in the London Plan 2021. The floor areas for each unit are as follows:

- Unit 1: 61.67 m²
- Unit 2: 42.11 m²
- Unit 3: 43.15 m²
- Unit 4: 42.11 m²
- Unit 5: 43.15 m²
- Unit 6: 42.11 m²

All 1-bedroom units meet the minimum required floor area for 1-bed, 1-person dwellings as outlined in the London Plan 2021. Internally, the units feature distinct living areas (bedroom and living room), which comply with fire safety standards. This is confirmed by the attached cover letter from the fire safety engineer, who has carried out a survey of the project.

Each unit is dual-aspect, with windows on both the front and rear elevations, ensuring sufficient natural light and ventilation. No primary habitable room windows are located on the side elevations, and there is no overlooking within 21 metres of neighbouring properties.

Regarding external amenity space, private balconies are not included in the proposal, as they would create visual clutter, undermine the architectural integrity of the building, and impact its character. Instead, communal amenity space is provided for all units. A total of 150 m² of communal space is located at the front of the building, near a protected oak tree, and 83 m² is provided at the rear. In total, this amounts to 233 m²,

surpassing the 95 m² minimum requirement specified in Policy DMH 1 of the Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 – Development Management Policies.

Additionally, the site benefits from its proximity to Court Park, offering further open recreational space for future residents, enhancing the overall amenity of the development.

In summary, the proposed development exceeds the minimum space requirements, ensuring high-quality internal and external spaces that provide a well-designed and sustainable environment for future residents.

Highways

The existing development provided 6 on-site parking spaces, along with a pickup and drop-off area for staff, visitors, and service users of the C2 accommodation. With the proposed conversion to C3, the need for a pickup/drop-off area and staff parking will no longer be required. The existing 6 parking spaces will be retained, providing 1 space per unit, with 1 space being fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). This meets the parking requirements in accordance with Policy T6.1 (Residential Parking) of the London Plan 2021, which sets out the need for residential developments to provide parking at a ratio of 1:1 in areas with low public transport accessibility (PTAL 0). Given that the site has a PTAL of 0, the retention of 6 spaces is considered appropriate for this development.

Additionally, secure and covered cycle parking will be provided near the front of the building, in line with Policy T5 (Cycling) of the London Plan 2021, which encourages the provision of high-quality cycle parking in new developments. A total of 7 cycle parking spaces will be provided: 1 space per 1-bedroom unit and 2 spaces for the 2-bedroom unit, in accordance with the requirements set out in Hillingdon Local Plan: Part 2 - Policy DMH 2 (Parking Standards and Access).

The bin stores have been positioned along the southern boundary of the site. These were approved as part of the original C2 application, and the location remains unchanged. As such, there are no anticipated concerns regarding waste management, and the location is consistent with the approved plans.

Conclusion

The proposal would not lead to the loss of residential accommodation, as the submission demonstrates that it would offer high-quality living spaces for future residents. The building would largely remain unchanged from its previous consent, ensuring that there is no negative impact on neighboring amenities or the character of the area. While it is acknowledged that the site is not in a highly sustainable location, sufficient parking and cycle parking will be provided. The development is of a high

standard and will contribute positively to the local housing supply. The public benefits of the scheme clearly outweigh any minor harm that may be identified.