

**IN THE MATTER OF A PLANNING APPLICATION RELATING TO  
LAND SITUATE AND KNOWN AS BRITANNIA LODGE 1 AILSA ROAD  
WESTCLIFF ON SEA IN THE COUNTY OF ESSEX**

**PLANNING APPLICATION SUBMITTED ON BEHALF OF  
STRACHAN VISICK LIMITED**

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**DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT**

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**RELATING TO THE APPLICATION FOR A PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL  
EXTENSION ON THE SAID LAND COMPRISING A PROPOSED  
SECOND FLOOR ADDITION TO THE EXISTING BUILDING ON THE  
SAID PROPERTY**

**ALBION PLANNING CONSULTANTS LIMITED  
SELWYN CHAMBERS  
SAMPSON HOUSE  
THE STREET  
WOOLPIT  
BURY ST EDMUNDS  
SUFFOLK IP30 9QN**

**TEL: 01359 245140**

**FAX: 01359 245085**

**Email: [info@albionconsultants.biz](mailto:info@albionconsultants.biz)**

**Website: [www.albionconsultants.biz](http://www.albionconsultants.biz)**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access Statement accompanies an Application for Planning Permission for proposed residential development on land at Britannia Lodge 1 Ailsa Road Westcliffe-on-Sea in the County of Essex. The proposed residential development comprises the proposed erection of extension on the existing premises. The premises are currently used for the provision of care facilities providing mental health nursing care for adults aged forty five years and over. At the present time the facilities can accommodate up to fifteen bed care patients.

1.2 The Design and Access Statement has been written to meet the requirements of Article 4C of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 (as amended).

1.3 Given that the proposal set out in the Planning Application is for a residential extension which is only designed to increase the capacity of the existing building and will not in any way lead to any change in use of the site some aspects of the guidelines relating to the social and economic context are of limited applicability.

## 2. DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND CONCEPTS

### 2.1 Amount of development proposed

2.1.1 The area of the site is shown on the plan attached to this Design and Access Statement which is marked Plan A. The plan which is on a scale of

1:1250 was prepared on by Haswell Associates Limited. The application site is shown encompassed by the bold interrupted red line on the said plan. At the present time, the site supports a large single residential building together with substantial grounds.

2.1.2 The building is located in a well established street scene of early nineteenth century substantial dwellings with some semi-detached and a number of detached. The building on the application site lies at the southern end of the road close to a 'T' junction beyond which lies the main C2C railway line. The road which is of an above average width rises upwards in a northerly direction away from the site of the application site known as Britannia Lodge 1 Ailsa Road aforesaid.

2.1.3 Almost opposite the application site but a little higher up the road are a pair of imposing semi-detached houses known as numbers 4 and 6 with a mock Tudor style of externally applied "bogus" black timber beams. They boast three storey accommodation and from the external visual inspection it appeared to be as originally constructed. They have a front semi-hexagonal bay with a flat roof very similar to the application site. The attic style third floor above that bay is under a full size forward facing gable roof with a "crippled" ceiling inside.

2.1.4 It should be noted that the two properties identified opposite the application site are not the only properties that feature an original third floor. A little further up the road on the same side as 1 Ailsa Road is a large detached house with a two storey front bay. On the roof of the property is a balcony with a balustrade serving the third floor front

window set below an imposing forward facing gable roof. It should also be noted that across the railway line but clearly visually linked with the road are four storey flats which are indicative of development reaching back to the early 1930's.

2.1.5 The appearance of the application site and the building located thereon is very sympathetic in scale to the others in the road including a modest amount of bogus beams applied to the south flank at first floor levels towards the front of the building. Given the significant number of its neighbouring dwellings that are already three stories in height as originally constructed it is clear that to now add a further floor to 1 Ailsa Road following the examples set by numbers 4 and 6 would clearly be in keeping with the surrounding properties and the street scene.

2.1.6 It should also be noted that the application site is located at the bottom end of the street gradient and thus the site lies a little below its immediate neighbour. To the south its nearest neighbour is a good few metres away and that dwellings rear garden provides good physical and visual separation from the flank walls of number 1 Ailsa Road.

2.1.7 The application site incorporates a modest size rear garden and incorporates some good mature tree specimens located on the boundaries which provide good screening from neighbouring properties.

2.1.8 The property on the location site is well located on a east west axis. It should be noted that in March the midday sun lights the flank landing window of number 3 which lies well above the shadow line of the existing

ridge of number 1 Ailsa Road. Accordingly, an additional storey on 1 Ailsa Road would not adversely impact on the adjacent property in terms of potential sunlight loss.

2.1.9 Dwellings to the south shadow their own gardens because their rear elevations face north. Accordingly, an additional storey for number 1 Ailsa Road will have no impact upon this existing situation at all. There are some intervening very tall conifers on the south boundary of number 1 Ailsa Road providing more visual separation from those dwellings to the south. Dwellings opposite and to the rear of number 1 Ailsa Road will be a sufficient distance from the site to be unaffected by the proposed development.

2.1.10 A series of coloured photographs is annexed to this Design and Access statement and marked appendix B. The said coloured photographs clearly illustrate the points mentioned above. The application site itself constitutes level land with no significant undulations.

2.1.11 Planning Policy Statement number 3 recognises that additional residential development cannot be viewed in isolation. It emphasises the wider context and the townscape. These themes are also reflected in the statutory development plan issued by Southend on Sea Borough Council for the area. It is clear that the proposed development now set out on the plans annexed hereto and marked appendix C comprising drawing numbers 0760/05 0760/06 put forward a scheme for an extension at second floor level which will be entirely consistent with and in keeping with existing development within the street. Given the dimensions of the site,

it is clearly possible to arrange for the proposed development comprising the second floor addition to be incorporated into the building and at the same time to provide adequate facilities within the application site for servicing the said additional storey.

2.1.12 The proposed development is clearly located within the settlement boundary and it is not allocated for an alternative use. It has no adverse impact upon the access, car parking or amenities space arrangements of any existing dwellings in the locality. The proposed additional storey extension would not have any adverse impact upon the peace and privacy enjoyed by adjacent existing residential occupiers.

2.1.13 The amount of the development proposed is entirely consistent with the recommendations set out in Planning Policy Statement number three concerning the required density for development of this nature on previously development land. It is clearly consistent with the amount of development permitted by Southend on Sea Borough Council relating to other similar sites in the area. It therefore follows that the amount of development proposed on the application site is fully in accordance with the policies of the Southend on Sea borough Council and the policies of Central Government.

2.1.14 Attention is drawn to plan 0760/01a which depicts the proposed second floor plan on a scale of 1:50. In the plan it is clearly shown that it is possible to provide four reasonably sized bedrooms on the second floor and to also include ensuite bathroom facilities for each of the said four bedrooms. It will be noted from the plan that the bedrooms can be

accessed by a hall way and also be a stairwell and by an adjacent lift shaft. It will also be noted from the drawing that there is ample facility for emergency access from the second floor and a fire exit by a stairwell is clearly shown on the said building.

2.1.15 The new storey proposed as part of the planning application will provide accommodation for up to four additional residents bringing the total number of residents from fifteen to nineteen. The fourth bedroom will be kept as a spare bedroom to ensure that flexible arrangements can be operated within the premises for specific occasions. It is therefore clear that the size of the proposed development is in fact a very small modest increase in the overall size of the existing development and can therefore be categorised as a small modest development scheme which may only lead to small increase in the use of the premises at a figure less than twenty five per cent in terms in increase in the number of residents.

2.1.16 A log has been kept relating to the use of the car park on the site for the months of July, August and September 2007. A copy of the car park log is annexed to this Design and Access Statement and marked appendix D. It will be noted that the log discloses low levels of activity so far as car parking use is concerned. It should be noted that given the nature of the use of the premises it is only the staff who attend the premises who use motor vehicles. It should be noted that the residents, given their background, do not use motor vehicles and the only other users of vehicles are of course visitors. In the circumstances, it is considered that the proposed development does not have any implications so far as car parking use is concerned.

## 2.2 Scale

- 2.2.1 A street scene clearly indicates that the height and width of the proposed new second floor addition to the premises is appropriate having regard to the scale of existing development in Ailsa Road. Whilst there is some variation in roof heights, it can be seen generally that the eave heights of the existing built development in Ailsa Road is remarkably consistent. It is also considered that the proposed second floor addition to Britannia Lodge at 1 Ailsa Road will result in a development on the site which will be equally consistent with existing development in terms of height and width within the vicinity of the application site.
- 2.2.2 The height of the ridge of the roof for the property on the application site after completion of the second storey addition will be ten metres approximately which is only a 0.5 metre increase over the existing ridge and should compare favourably with other properties in Ailsa Road including those at three storey height. The roof pitch on the property is typical of other properties in Ailsa Road. It is a detached property and therefore is viewed individually in the street scene.
- 2.2.3 The circular accompanying the regulations indicates that the elements of the design have to be justified in terms of human scale. In the present case, the proposed residential extension is designed to relate well to the neighbouring properties and it is considered to be well related to the human scale. The proposed second floor is not as tall as the existing floors below and it therefore appears quite subservient to the main dwelling

given the appearance of attic type accommodation with 'crippled' ceilings. It will create a very domestic environment internally which will harmonies with the existing building.

## 2.3 Appearance

2.3.1 The predominant character of Ailsa Road Westcliffe-on-Sea is that of early nineteenth century substantial dwelling comprising a mix of detached and semi-detached substantial properties in substantial grounds. It will be noted under the terms of the proposals for the construction of the second floor addition an attempt has been made to visually integrate the additional storey within the building. Although bogus beam elevation external treatments exist in the street on some near neighbouring properties the nature of this extension with reduced height elevations is not felt appropriate as it may be seen as too fussy and contrived.

2.3.2 It should be noted that many of the material will be recycled including roof timbers and original roof tiles that are substantially weathered. The design concept is to ensure that we have a scheme which blends in with existing character of the area and harmonies in a visually subordinate manner to the existing building. The attic style proposed does just this

2.3.3 The design fully accords with the most recent Central Government guidance as expressed in Planning Policy Statement number 1. The design also fully complies with the policies set out in the Statutory Development Plan for Southend on Sea Borough Council.

## 2.4 **Layout**

2.4.1 The layout of the proposed development is of course governed by the existing form of the residential development on the site. The proposed second floor addition is designed to complement the ground floor and existing first floor stories of the property. The layout is therefore constrained by the existing ground and first floor part of the building.

2.4.2 It should also be noted the layout also includes the proposed extension to the existing conservatory at ground floor area for the purpose of ensuring that additional communal areas are provided. The proposed development is designed in such a way as to ensure that the additional number of residents amounting to an additional further four residents can be accommodated and supported by the existing facilities within the existing building. The increased communal area will ensure that the same ratio between communal areas and residents is maintained in the extended building as appears in the original current building.

## 2.5 **Landscaping**

2.5.1 Given the fact that the property already exists on a large plot with mature landscaping there are no proposals for any additional new landscaping.

## 2.6 Examination of relevant planning policies

- 2.6.1 In considering the Policy Framework, one should first consider National Planning Guidance and then the policies in the Local Statutory Development Plan. Clearly, National Planning Guidance now favours the better use of existing urban land. It is clear that the appeal site is located within the urban settlement within an area allocated for residential development. National Policy as set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note Number 3 clearly supports the better use of residential land where it will achieve a more efficient form of development. The current proposal which comprises a proposal for additional storey on the existing site puts forward a scheme for the more efficient use of a very substantial area of land within the existing settlement boundary.
- 2.6.2 The current proposal also clearly supports provision of additional much needed residential care facilities within the area. It is also clearly in accordance with the general character of the area.
- 2.6.3 It is also considered that proposed development is entirely consistent with the policies set out in the Statutory Development Plan. In particular, it should be noted that the proposed development takes into account the following:-

- (a) Design and layout clearly respects the character of the site and the relationship of the proposed development to its surroundings.
- (b) The design clearly complements the scale, form and materials of traditional building in the area.
- (c) The amenities of neighbouring residents are not unduly affected either by reason of over looking or by loss of daylight.
- (d) The proposed development respects existing levels of privacy in the area and maintains sufficient day lighting and sun lighting and does not in any way affect the private amenity space or gardens.
- (e) The proposed development does not in any way affect landscape features.
- (f) The proposed development does not have any implications for the local highway network.

2.6.4 It is contended that the proposed development scheme is entirely consistent with the objectives set out in Statutory Development Plan. Given the fact that the proposal is for a form of development consistent with the character of the area and in particular the predominating style and design of properties in the area, it is abundantly clear that the proposal cannot be rejected on policy grounds.

2.6.5 It is also clear that Central Government favours development on sites which are regarded as acceptable in terms of sustainable development. It is contended that the application site in this case fully accords with the principles relating to sustainable development. In particular, it is quite clear that the site is well served by existing public transport links together

with all of the necessary local supports services within easy level walking distance. It should be noted that Westcliffe-on-Sea is a large settlement. It has all of the main support services required of a town within the settlement boundary. It therefore follows that the application site is a sustainable site given its close proximity to existing services.

2.6.6 In order to provide further assistance in considering the policies in the Planning Policy Statement No. 3 on Housing, we now set out in the following points:-

“Maintaining a Supply of Housing

The Government is committed to promoting more sustainable patterns of development by :-

concentrating most additional housing development within urban areas;

making more efficient use of land maximizing the re-use of previously-developed land and the conversion and re-use of existing buildings;

assessing the capacity of urban areas to accommodate more housing;

adopting a sequential approach to the allocation of land for housing development;

managing the release of housing land; and

reviewing existing allocations of housing land in plans and planning permissions when they come up for renewal.

### Re-using Urban Land and Buildings

The Government is committed to maximizing the re-use of previously-developed land and empty properties and the conversion of non-residential buildings for housing in order both to promote regeneration and minimize the amount of Greenfield land being taken for development.

### Making the Best Use of Land

Local planning authorities should avoid the inefficient use of land. New housing development in England is currently built at an average of 25 dwellings per hectare but more than half of all new housing is built at less than 20 dwellings per hectare. That represents a level of land take which is historically very high and which can no longer be sustained. Such development is also less likely to sustain local services or public transport, ultimately adding to social exclusion. Local planning authorities should therefore examine critically the standards they apply to new development particularly with regard to roads, layouts and car parking, to avoid the profligate use of land. Policies which place unduly restrictive ceilings on the amount of housing that can be accommodated on a site irrespective of its location and the type of housing envisaged or the types of households likely to occupy the housing, should be avoided.

### 3.0 **ACCESS**

#### 3.1 **Access to the transport network**

3.1.1 The site is within the built up area of Westcliffe-on-Sea. It is well located for pedestrian access to facilities such as the local convenience shops, the local railway station, doctors, schools and public open space all within close proximity.

3.1.2 Public transport is well provided for in the locality. There are bus stops in adjacent residential roads which are accessible from the site. The service to the nearest large major town, Southend-on-Sea, is very regular during the day between the hours of 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m.

3.1.3 The location of the site is sustainable and has good provision for means other than the car.

#### 3.2 **Car provision**

3.2.1 The car parking policies are essentially superseded by Government advice in Planning Policy Statement No. 3. This seeks a reduction in on-site car parking. This is reflected in the vehicle parking standards applicable to the area. It should be noted that the additional four residents will not

generate additional car parking requirements arising from the needs of the residents given that they will neither own nor drive motor vehicles.

3.2.2 Consultation has taken place with the Highway Authority at Essex County Council. It is agreed that with the low traffic levels in Ailsa Road, Westcliffe-on-Sea, there is no objection to the proposals as set out on the plan.

### 3.3 **Inclusive access**

3.3.1 Given that the application is only for the erection of a residential extension, the reference to wider consultation in the Regulations is not applicable.

3.3.2 The development site is level and accordingly there are no issues relating to gradients.

3.3.3 The submitted plans fully comply with the policy and design requirements for the provision of housing suitable for disabled people. It should be noted that some of the criteria however do relate to internal aspects which the Circular accompanying the Regulations indicates do not need to be addressed in a Design and Access Statement.

## 4.0 **CONSULTATIONS**

4.1 The Highway Authority was consulted and there are no objections.

4.2 The Environment Agency's website has been checked. This shows that the site is in Zone 1 for flooding. No separate consultation was therefore needed.

4.3 Given that the development relates to the proposed erection of a residential extension and therefore do not constitute public buildings, no consultation has been undertaken with any access group.

4.4 According to our records, there is no local amenity society with an interest in Westcliffe-on-Sea and accordingly no consultation with such a body was possible.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 It is therefore recommended that Planning Permission be granted in accordance with the plans submitted.

Albion Planning Consultants Limited  
Selwyn Chambers  
Sampson House  
The Street  
Woolpit  
Suffolk IP30 9QN

Tel: 01359 245140 Fax: 01359 245085

Email: [info@albionconsultants.biz](mailto:info@albionconsultants.biz)

Website: [www.albionconsultants.biz](http://www.albionconsultants.biz)