

Design Development



PRE-APPLICATION

A draft pre-application was submitted in August 2020, which sought to establish the acceptability of the principle of redeveloping the site for a Class C2 care home and to establish the broad principles of height, scale, massing, bulk and design. It was supported by a draft Design & Access Statement, preliminary Heritage Assessment and Planning Statement.

The proposed site plan primarily considered scale; functionality; accessibility, and proximity / massing in relation to adjacent properties. It was a key concern to keep the proposed footprint set as far back from boundary lines as possible, in order to provide amenity and outlook spaces for residents, while also minimising overlooking & overshadowing to neighbouring properties.

A further key distinction of the proposal was to relocate the main entrance from North Hill to View Road. View Road has the larger frontage and also offers the opportunity for vehicular access. The existing North Hill entrance does not work as a main entrance to a care home; it has little kerb appeal; the entrance is discreet; and little is offered by way of drop off, visitor and emergency vehicle parking spaces.

The proposed redevelopment was to take in to consideration the character of the locality, history of the site and proximity to immediate surroundings. The proposed massing was to broadly reflect that of the existing and remain in keeping with the conservation area.

In order to keep building mass reduced as far as is practical, an extended basement below the main care home was proposed. This would enable for vehicle parking where the frontages are limited and ancillary accommodation.

It was agreed through the pre-application that the proposal would be split between View Road and North Hill so that the site was to be fully redeveloped in order to achieve a viably sized care home.

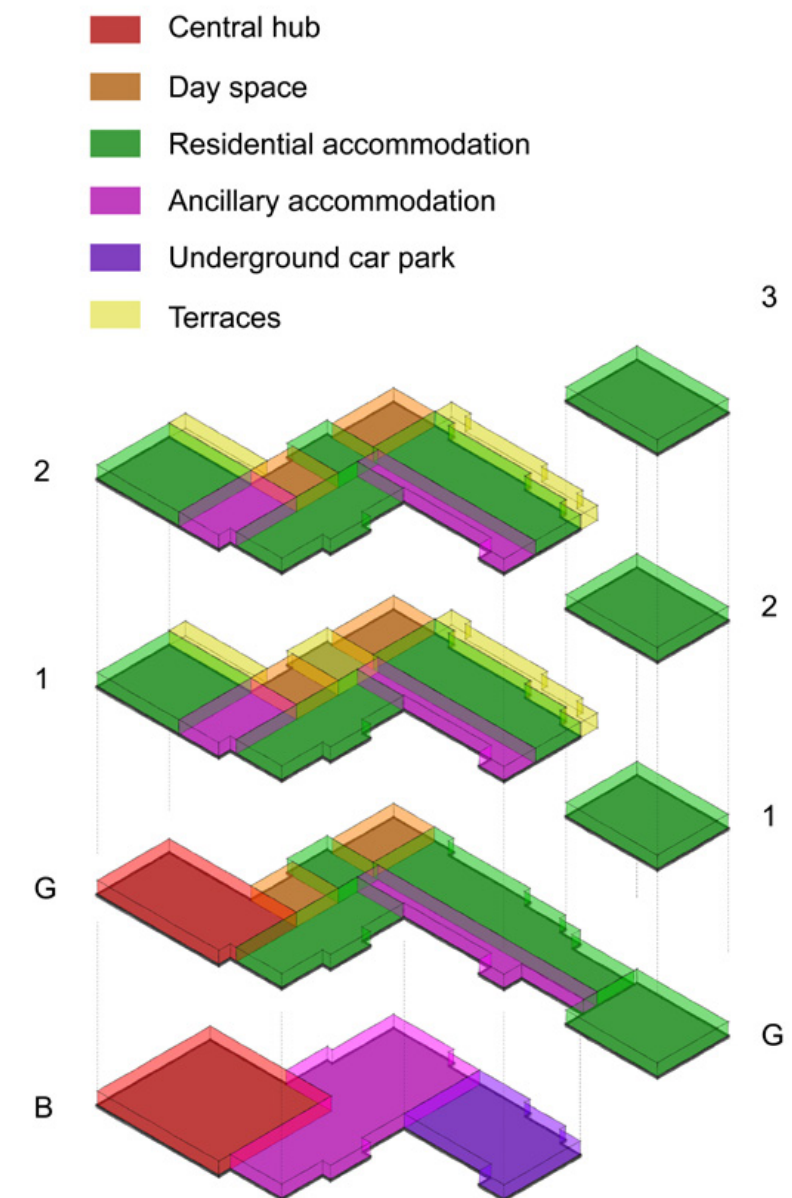
The care home was designed to remain strongly in keeping with the locality. Symmetry, traditional detailing and traditional materials are key to maintaining the character within the area.

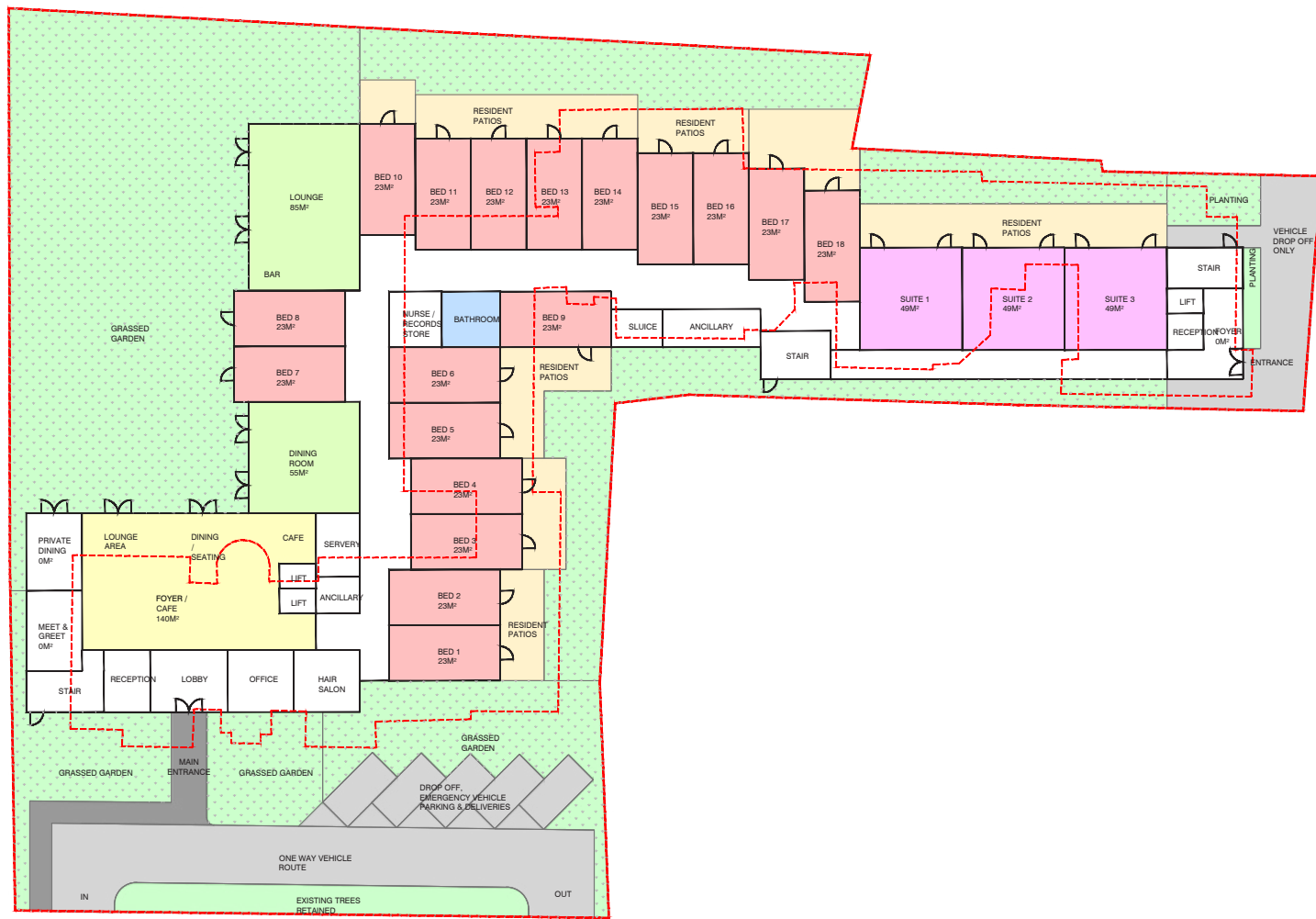
Building heights had been kept broadly similar to the existing building.

It was envisioned that a strong focal point was created (lacking in the exiting building) whilst remaining complimentary to the character of its local surroundings.

MASSING AND USE CONCEPT

- Hub central over two storeys to provide clearly defined, welcoming space and required level of resident use facilities.
- Day space positioned to take advantage of garden views.
- Ancillary and vehicle parking proposed in basement.
- Residential accommodation to provide aspect.

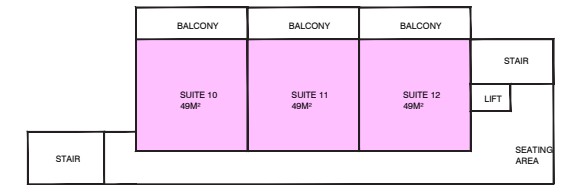




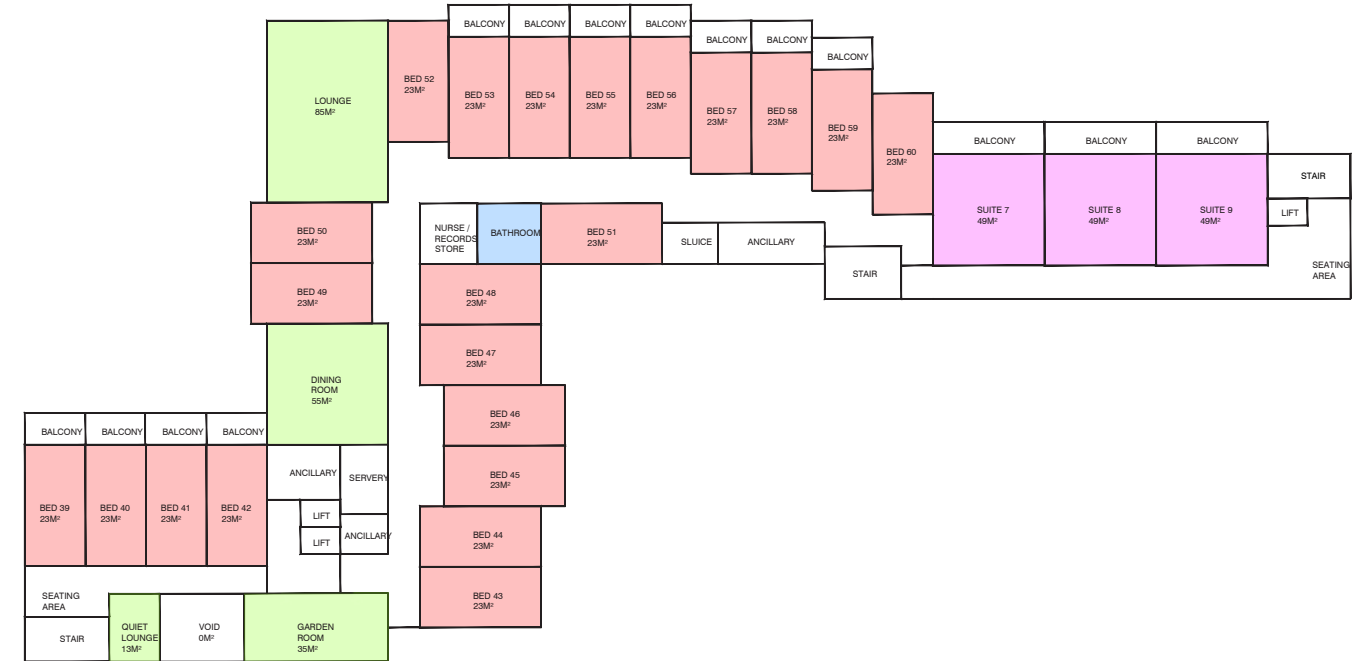
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



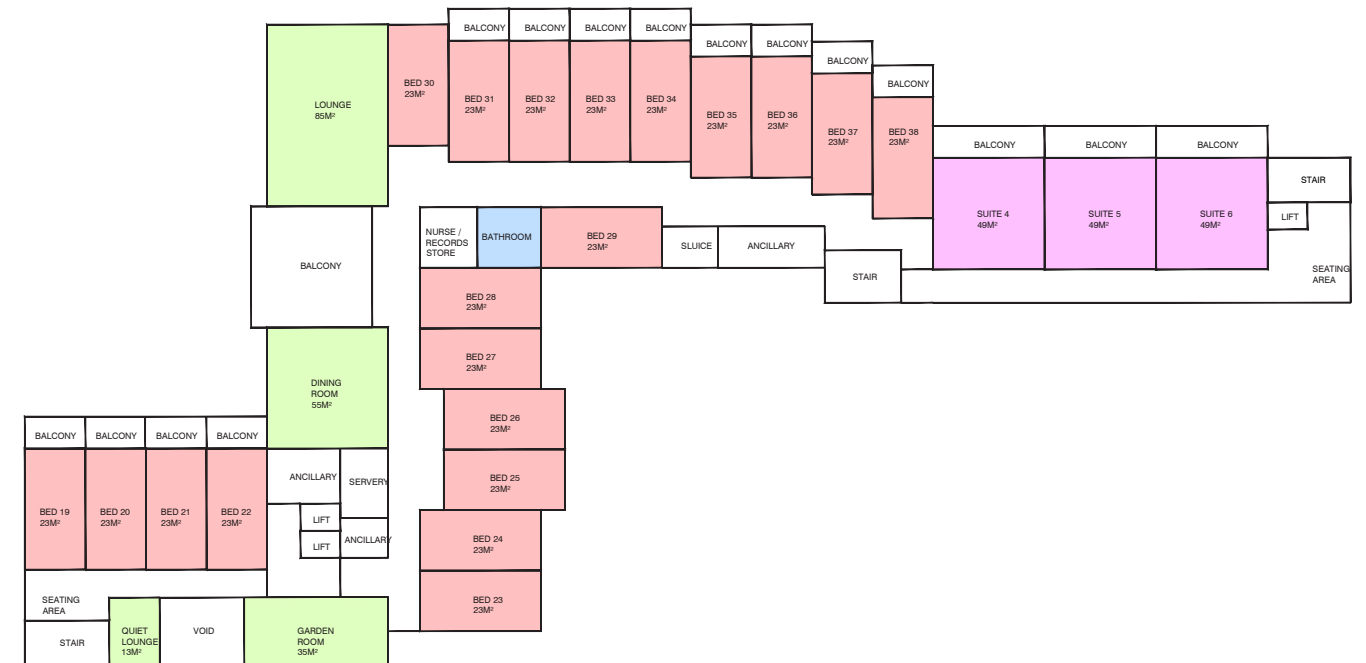
Proposed Basement Plan



Proposed Third Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

PRE-APPLICATION RESPONSE

The principle of retaining a care home within the C2 Use Class is supported and welcomed by the Council.

While demolition of most of the sites existing buildings would be supported, the Council's preference would be to retain those elements of the building that formed the original house on View Road. In order for the complete demolition of the site to be acceptable, it would need to be demonstrated that the retention of the original structure would not be viable. While the Council would be supportive of an increase in development on this site if it secures the long term future of a C2 care home, there are concerns regarding the potential impact of some elements of the scheme on the residential amenity of neighbouring occupiers. Some reduction or reorganisation of the massing of the scheme may be required in order to avoid it appearing overbearing in relation to neighbouring properties. Daylight and sunlight studies will be required to ensure an acceptable relationship with neighbours.

The Council is not wedded to a particular design approach. A contemporary or more traditional form of architecture could be supported provided that the selected approach displays the necessary quality and that the design and massing of the scheme respect the special historic and architectural context of the conservation area. While a traditional design approach could work here there are concerns that the approach presented in the submission verges on the pastiche. High quality traditional architecture can be difficult to do well, and the Council will often prefer an authentically contemporary design to a poor-quality attempt to "play safe".



North Hill Pedestrian Entrance



View Road Main Entrance



View Road Main Entrance

Following the initial pre-application enquiry and response, extensive pre-application discussions were carried out under the framework of a Planning Performance Agreement (PPA). Through this we explored a number of different options and architectural responses to create a high quality design was sensitive to the locality and wider contextual conservation area.

At an early stage of the PPA the principle of demolition of Kekewich House was accepted following the analysis undertaken. The existing building cannot accommodate facilities to meet market expectation for care in this current day. This was discussed with Planning Officers and accepted.

It was also agreed that, as the application site lies on the crossroads of View and North Hill in Highgate Conservation Area, the two distinct streetscapes give a unique opportunity to create two separate architectural design approaches within their context. While View Road is typically traditional in character with classic Georgian and Queen Anne styles, the defining character of North Hill is the mixture of styles representing moments of history over many centuries.

We were encouraged by Officers to explore an approach where we had different designs for the two different site frontages, rather than a consistent design approach across the site. The proposed architectural style at both View Road and North Hill will be a high quality, contemporary response to the existing context.

Although 'high quality' architecture could be argued as subjective, the basic principles of high quality architecture takes into account durability, utility as well as beauty. Fundamentally a high quality design goes beyond the aesthetics where quality detailing can ensure sustainable performance as well as durable and well built developments.

Right indicates a developed design form and materiality concept for View Road. The broad design approach to the materials of the proposal are to be red brick with detailing to provide a contemporary take on the character in the surrounding area and to help break up the mass of the elevations.

An additional storey was added at this stage so as to allow for a reduced size basement, required resident facility, and a viable number of beds.

Contemporary brickwork detail is proposed to in homage to traditional detailing within the area. Traditional elements such as Quoins, brick detailing, lead roofs, dormers and projecting window boxes have been explored and re-imagined in a contemporary manner, in order to create a building genuine to period, whilst remaining respecting of its wider context.

Standing seam roof & contemporary window boxes, perhas in lead, in homage to lead detail dormers in the locality.

Contemporary take on brick quoin detailing. Brick quoins feature long view road in Georgian, Queen Anne and modern traditional properties.

Windows and doors to be in contemporary, high quality mateiral, parhaps as aluminium.

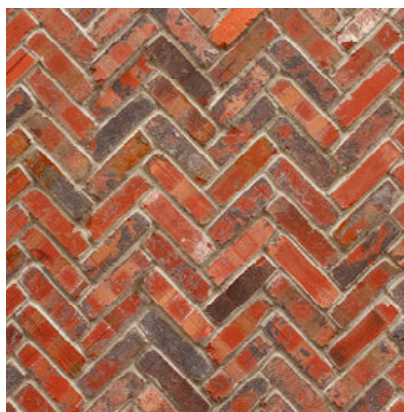
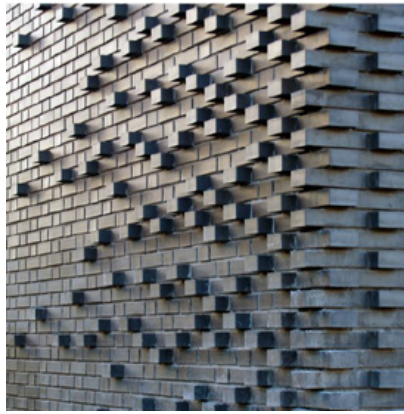
Sawtooth brick detail to introduce vertical elements to break up elevational form.

Projecting brick bay in non standard brick patern to add interest and break up elevation. Projecting window boxes and upper storey bays feature as a design element on more contemporary archittctural styles throughout the locality.

Red & brown brick predominant in the locality. Red multi brick proposed so as to sit harmoniously within surroundings.

Brick detail to add interest and draw the eye up the building.





From the site analysis and North Hill locality studies, it was deemed that the most appropriate architectural response to the replacement building would be in a contemporary style, which would complement the sensitivity of the surrounding buildings and conservation area.

We looked to propose a building that is contemporary in design and true to its era, but also to harmonize with the locality. There is an opportunity to add to the historic nature of North Hill and its varied architectural styles in a way that incorporates typical Georgian design features of balance and symmetry in a modern way that enables the proposed building to continue the narrative of the conservation area.

The broad design approach to the materials of the proposal are to be red / brown brick with detailing to provide a contemporary take on the character in the surrounding area and to help break up the mass of the elevations.

By using brick, we can implement different detailing techniques in a contemporary way which can pay homage to the surrounding different styles of both North Hill and View Road.

The images below show the development of the facade treatment at North Hill implementing these design influences and indicate a series of design options exploring the materials and style of the elevations.

The architectural style is so varied at North Hill that it was felt that there was no clear design approach to follow.

It was felt most appropriate to take inspiration from the adjacent listed Georgian terraces.

Whilst believing that the design response should be contemporary, we sought to follow typically Georgian features of balance and symmetry, whilst also incorporating some of the contemporary features from View Road, in order to help create a more holistic response.

Detail included express brickwork and brickwork detailing patterns as indicated in the precedent images to the left.



After further design development and lengthy discussions with Planning Officers, regarding height, scale bulk, massing, and design treatment, the scheme was presented at a Quality Review Panel in May 2021.

The panel were not wholly convinced by the current proposals and felt that further work was required at both a strategic and a detailed level. Excerpt from Panel response:

“At a strategic level, further site analysis and a greater understanding of the nature and qualities of the local context is required. This should feed into the process of re-visiting the brief for development to create something joyful, prioritising high quality, liveable residential care accommodation that complements and enhances the local context and conservation area.

Consideration of embodied energy, alongside a ‘fabric first’ approach to sustainable design should inform early, strategic decisions about the nature, overall configuration, and detail of the scheme. The relationship of the building to the landscape will also be very important, as will the scale, quality and design of external landscaped amenity spaces.

Further work to reduce the scale, massing and building footprint is required;

While scope also remains to refine the scheme layout, and architectural expression of the proposals. As design work continues, it will be important for scheme drawings and images to show the proposals within contextual sections and elevations.

Further technical work is also required, to include daylight / sunlight analysis, transport input, and arrangements for servicing, waste management, deliveries, parking / accessible parking, and cycle storage.

The panel would encourage the design team to develop a calmer, more coherent approach to the architectural expression of the proposals that avoids cluttering the elevations with ‘stuck-on’ appropriated local details.

Clarity on the role and purpose of the North Hill building would also be welcomed. The panel notes that significant space in prominent locations is allocated as changing areas, which seems unnecessary.”



Above and below: View Road main entrance as seen from existing vehicle access points.





Above: North Hill, pedestrian entrance. Below: Care Home main garden view.



QRP SUMMARY:

The overall principle was accepted but various areas needed refinement and further consideration.

It was understood that the following key areas would need to be addressed:

- Clarify the brief: Define use of the building use in respect of care type provisions and well being facilities.
- Height, scale and massing: An alternative concept omitting the top storeys. Subsequent increase to the basement floor plan would be necessitated.
- Development density: In order to better follow the existing urban grain.
- Relationship to context at both View Road and North Hill: To provide respectful juxtaposition adjacent to existing buildings, including the listed terraces at North Hill and locally listed Tanzanian Ambassador's house at View Road.
- Plan form articulation: To better relate to the existing urban grain, to rationalise use of spaces and flow between facilities.
- Relation to garden and landscape design: To further involve the landscape architect and better link the interior plan form and use with the garden concept.
- Servicing and deliveries strategy: To consider parking arrangements, deliveries, servicing, use by staff, guests and residents.
- Sustainability: To further involve the Sustainability consultant, and bring design intent to the forefront of the design solution.
- Public engagement: To engage with local residents and amenity groups.

DESIGN RESPONSE

Following the QRP review we revisited the concept at a strategic level. We primarily focussed on the following areas:

- Building height reduced by a storey. Main entrance elevation at View Road to sit better within its context with respect to number of floors. Pedestrian access at North Hill to better relate to height of neighbouring listed terraces.
- Building footprint reduced in plan form width, in order for the proposal to better follow the existing urban grain and maximise usability of garden, whilst also achieving a viable number of bedrooms.
- Relationship to context considered. At View Road the design now incorporates gables and a dormer roof accommodation. At North Hill the parapet is brought down to match the ridge of the adjacent neighbour. Three bays are proposed to stress elegance and the width of individual bays of the terrace. The bays are stepped back in order to move away from the main entrance to the property at 109 North Hill.
- The design is more respectful of the locality and aims to provide a contemporary reinterpretation of its surrounding context. The design includes contemporary design elements in order to create a design true to its era, avoiding becoming pastiche.
- The landscape Architect has become fully engaged and the concept of a healing garden is considered, as the relationship of outdoor spaces to indoor spaces.
- Servicing and deliveries are further considered and options for both explored.
- The Sustainability Consultant, Hodkinson, has become fully engaged and set out key principals to adhere to. The design follows a fabric first approach and includes sustainable technologies including communal air source heat pumps and PV panels.
- Sustainability: To further involve the Sustainability consultant, and bring design intent to the forefront of the design solution.



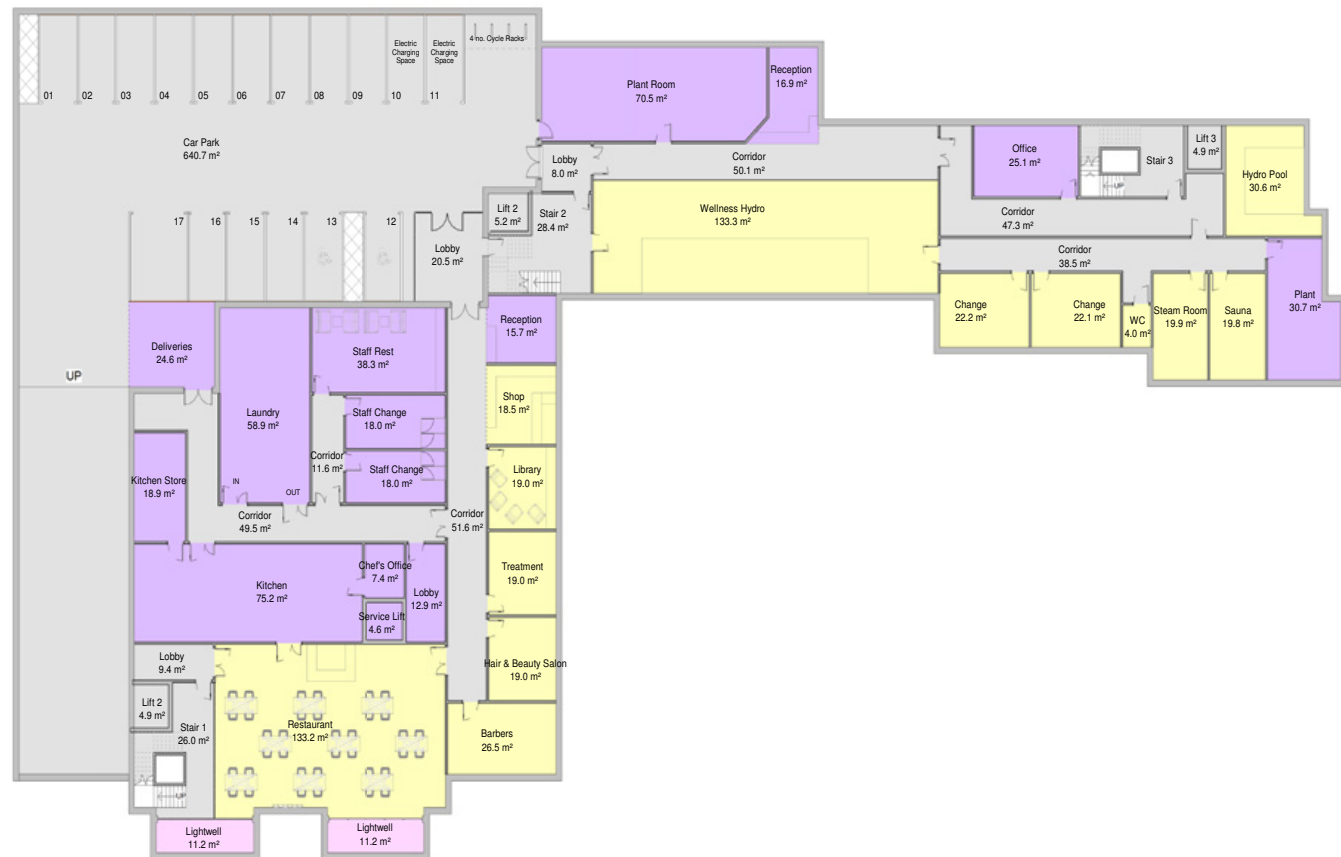


Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed Second Floor Plan

Proposed Third Floor Plan



Proposed Basement Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan

The further developed scheme was presented at a Chairs Review, with two of the members of the original Quality Review Panel. Officers, and the chair, felt that a full review was not necessary as the design had progressed positively and had addressed many of the original comments.

QUALITY REVIEW PANEL CHAIR'S REVIEW SUMMARY

- The panel is pleased that the applicant's intention is to retain the use of this important site for residential care accommodation. It thanks the project team for the helpful presentation, and feels that the work done in response to the previous review has been very positive. It commends the tenacity of the project team, working with planning officers and consulting with the community.
- The panel supports many of the strategic moves made during design development; however it feels that the massing and detail of the roofscape could be further improved, along with the architectural expression of the scheme. It would also encourage further consideration of the scheme layout, to improve the quality of the communal accommodation and circulation areas, while enhancing the relationship between key shared spaces and adjacent garden areas.
- The retention and re-purposing of the North Hill block should be considered, alongside a wider strategy for the re-use on site of any appropriate demolition material.
- The panel accepts the massing and development density of the proposals, but would encourage the project team to refine the massing of the roofscape to further reduce the visual bulk of the building. In addition, the ridge-line of the pitched roofs across the scheme could potentially be lowered.
- The panel welcomes the adjustments to the building footprint, which has been pulled away from adjacent buildings to allow for a more generous gap than currently exists.
- While the panel regrets the reduction of the garden space, it feels this is acceptable as the building footprint has also been pulled away from the boundary in some locations, providing a more generous distance to adjacent buildings.
- The panel welcomes the concept of the healing garden, with its aspiration to nurture the physical and mental well-being of residents. Careful consideration of the path, the orientation of the garden and the ramp access will be required to ensure that a strong visual and physical relationship is created between the internal accommodation and the garden.
- The panel would like to see further refinements to the scheme layout, to create a better relationship (both visually and physically) between internal communal areas and the garden spaces externally. The terrace areas in the 'elbow' of the scheme also need further work.
- The panel is concerned by the intention to locate the restaurant in the basement. Instead, it would like to see it at ground floor level, ideally in the west-facing section of building overlooking the garden (where there are currently a number of individual rooms shown). The kitchen could remain at basement level.
- Some of the other uses currently located within the basement would also be much better suited to being located at ground level, including staff rooms and communal facilities.
- The panel feels that the proportion of circulation space within the North Hill block is unbalanced and would like to see improvements to the efficiency of the floor plans.
- It would also support further refinement of the design of the circulation spaces and communal areas, to include increasing the generosity of - and daylight access to - corridors, circulation cores and stairwells.
- Greater clarity would be welcomed on the arrangements for refuse storage and how this will work in practice for the different parts of the development.
- The panel feels in particular that it would be beneficial to get daylight into the stairwell that is bounded by the flank wall, and would encourage exploration of options, including fritted glass.
- As at the previous review, the panel would like to know more about the strategic and detailed approach to low carbon design and environmental sustainability within the scheme.
- The panel is confident that the project team will be able to address points in consultation with Haringey officers.

DESIGN RESPONSE, LEADING ON TO FULL APPLICATION DESIGN PROPOSAL

- Additional detail added to elevations, particularly at View Road where it thought appropriate to do so in relation to the surrounding context.
- Roof form investigated with alterations made where necessary such as half hipped roofs to both wings of the building to the View Road frontage and general reduction of pitch by 5 degrees.
- Terrace design revisited as lies heavy structures and relationship between hub space generally reconsidered.
- Restaurant re-located from the basement to the ground floor, placed to open out on to the proposed healing garden. This allows the restaurant space to utilise both the views out onto the garden and direct access for outdoor seating etc. The revised location also allows for natural light to flood the space.
- Staff accommodation omitted from the basement and situated on the top floor of North Hill to create a staff floor / quarters. In re-locating staff areas, such as staff room & staff change, this allows for natural light to into staff spaces so as to improve wellbeing.
- North Hill layout generally redesigned to become more efficient with regards to the use of space and circulation.
- Window opening placed within stairwells & circulation spaces where possible to enable natural light into the spaces.
- Refuse collection and deliveries to the home further considered. Back of house lift and delivery areas added to the ground and basement floor plans.
- Further engagement with sustainability consultant. A separate report will accompany this application.

